JOSEPHUS

THE JEWISH WAR

Newly translated with extensive commentary and archaeological background illustrations

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Half title:
Shekel dating to the war years

Frontispiece:
A wide flight of stairs led to the Hulda Double Gate (whose right walled remnant is visible in the center). The ruins beneath are excavated remains of the Ophel. The area is topped by the Islamic silver dome of the Aqsa mosque and a crusaders rampart on the left. The ancient structures of the Hanuyot (Royal Porticos of the Temple mount) are still extant beneath the Aqsa.

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INTRODUCTION

Josephus the historian

Born Joseph ben Matthias (ca. AD 38-100), Josephus was a priest from Jerusalem whose active life encompassed the second half of the first century AD. He is called *Flavius Josephus,* the "Flavius" being a later embellishment taken in deference to the patronage of the emperor Vespasian, whose family name it was, and who headed the Flavian dynasty. Josephus wrote several works of history that rank above any other accounts that have survived over the ages dealing with the history, topography, and the social, political and economic life of Jerusalem and Palestine (called Judaea). He was a gifted man of letters, deeply versed in the written source of his own times and earlier days; and the present work, the *Jewish War,* is the basic classic source of Jewish history after the end of Old Testament times, and is equally permeated with the biblical narrators' incomparable charm and style in relating history. This is no less true of Josephus' narrative style in recording the fascinating life story of Herod in Book I or the tragic end of Masada in Book VII.

He apparently wrote in Aramaic and made a Greek translation with the help of assistants in Rome, especially for the benefit of the Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora. His work has survived in the Greek language. His principal creations are: *The Jewish War* in seven books, covering the period from Antiochus Epiphanes' conquest of Jerusalem in 170 BC to the tragedy of Masada in AD 74. It was translated toward the end of Vespasian's reign between AD 75 and 79. This was followed by a larger work, the *Antiquities of the Jews,* published in AD 93-94 in twenty books, that gives the history of the Israelites from Genesis to the outbreak of the Great War with Rome (AD 66), eulogizing Israel and its cultures. They have all survived in the Greek.

The debate over Josephus

Josephus has been the subject of almost unending debate. He has been condemned as a traitor and praised as a political realist. At this distance, it seems that a distinction must be made between his political outlook, that of a pacifist, which showed a realistic approach and foresight, and his personal behavior. Another distinction must be made between Josephus the man and Josephus the historian. No doubt his historical works fall short of complete accuracy, as is also true of the works of Roman historians of the time; however it is of great importance that Josephus aimed at producing a fully detailed record and rescued many facts from oblivion, sometimes as a result of his own meticulous investigation. His ability as speech composer in various parts of the book may be traced to his desire to identify as closely as he could the contemporaneous tenor of such speeches, as other ancient historians were wont to do.

It is natural to assume, as has been done in the past, that Josephus' text is colored to a great extent by his own record, for his defection to the Roman side was regarded by many contemporaries as treachery, by others as common sense. It is rather his judgment as a historian, e.g., his pacifist and pro-Roman bias, that made him unpopular in the days of the Great Revolt. His statements can, however, be correlated with data preserved in other ancient sources, such as the *Letter of Aristeas* (early second century BC) and the Books of the Maccabees for the Hellenistic period, and the New Testament, the Mishna and the Talmud for Roman times. Moreover, it is necessary to compare many parts of Josephus' text in the *Jewish War*—as we have done—with the corresponding material in *Antiquities* (Books XIII, 225 to XVIII, 11) and with the First Book of Maccabees. The grand sweep of *Antiquities,* in particular, characterizes the old surviving historical narrative of the genre that became popular in Hellenistic times. One of Josephus' main sources was the historian Nicolaus of Damascus, a first-rate contemporary of Graeco-Syrian origin. The latter was no lover of the Hasmonean dynasty, but Josephus undoubtedly derived from Nicolaus, the detailed and fascinating history of Herod's house and extraordinary career—an account that fills two-thirds of Book I, and the accession of his successor Archelaus (the beginning of Book II), in which Nicolaus played an important part.

As historian of the present work, Josephus thus comes before the modern reader with apparently high credentials such as few war historians can have enjoyed. We must carefully examine his descriptions of Jerusalem, its walls, the Temple Mount, and other historical structures in Jerusalem and in Palestine. We must try, according to Benjamin Mazar, dean of Israel archaeologists, and his confreres, to appreciate and, if necessary, correct the accounts and *verify them against the results of modern systematic archaeological excavation.*

Archaeological evidence

Mazar believes that "a sharp dividing line must be drawn between Josephus the historian drawing at his discretion on available sources and tradition. It must be remembered that he knew Jerusalem through and through and was also an eye-witness and participant in many of the dramatic events leading to and occurring during the Jewish revolt against the Romans, which culminated in the final destruction of the city and the state. In consequence, despite all discrepancies, ambiguities, contradictions and plain mistakes" [which are dealt with in this commentary] "the fact remains that Josephus was a highly reliable witness, not only with respect to events in Palestine and Jerusalem of his own times, but also, though to a somewhat lesser extent, with regard to earlier times, for which he depended on available traditional Jewish sources. In sum, despite ambiguities and exaggerations, his is the most comprehensive surviving account in existence, and his works are the best available guide to an understanding and knowledge of the Great Revolt and destruction of the Second Temple. Meanwhile, the progress of archaeological investigation highlight now, more than ever, the importance of Josephus as a primary source for the study of the topography and history of Jerusalem in Herodian times, as well as other sites such as Caesarea, Herodion, Gamla, Samaria, Jericho, Antipatris. His descriptions of the forts and cities have proven to be extremely accurate.... All this we were able to confirm on repeated occasions through our archaeological investigations" (*The Mountain of the Lord,* pp. 14-15).

This opinion is echoed by Nachman Avigad's excavation, related in his *Upper City of Jerusalem* and by other archaeologists engaged in significant excavations in other parts of the ancient land.

Evaluation

With regard to his political opinions, it may be added that one of the fundamental theses he advanced—that a minority of extremists, the Zealots (about whom much has been learned in recent years, as outlined in this commentary), overcame the moderate party in Judaea and drove the country into rebellion—is true only in the restricted sense that in this rebellion, as in all others, the extreme minority succeeded in casting the die for a sympathetic but reluctant majority. It is noteworthy also that Josephus scarcely mentions the part played by the contemporay messianic movements that preceded and accompanied the political upheaval, apparently regarding them as so many aspects of Zealotry. But where his own personal attitude or behavior is not in question, Josephus is a source of undeniable integrity. Hence the commentary, that accompanies the ancient text will try to delineate the responsibility that history has allotted to the parties in a situation in which the underlying essence of the Roman-Jewish conflict was between minds incapable of any mutual understanding; for this conflict was between the Jewish ideal of a Jewish state subordinate to the national religion and to the nostalgic messianic dream of the House of David on the one hand, and the cosmopolitanism of imperial Rome, in which religion itself was subordinate to the state, on the other.

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METHODOLOGY OF THIS BOOK

This book is planned to present the material as follows: Josephus' text, in a revised translation, is set forth at the top of the pages in bold type, while the comprehensive commentary, with relevant illustrations, maps, and diagrams, follows and surrounds the text, and is printed in smaller type on the rest of the page. Each item commented on is marked by an alphabetic letter (a, b, c, etc.) in the text and with corresponding commentary. The illustrations represent the latest relevant finds and discoveries in the field as explained in "Archaeological evidence" above.

THE EDITOR

BOOK I

Josephus' Preamble

1. (1) The war of the Jews against the Romans grew into the greatest conflict—not only of our time, but of almost all other recorded conflicts—between cities or nations, and so it has not lacked historians.

Inadequacy of previous histories

(2) Among them one can distinguish two types of writers: those who were not present at the events and merely recorded, in rhetorical style, casual and contradictory tales collected from hearsay [*a*], and others who wrote on a basis of personal experience, but whose recounting of the facts was influenced either by excessive flattery of the Romans or hatred of the Jews. Consequently, these works were characterized either by invective or fault finding, but not by accurate factual history [*b*]. (3) Thus, I Josephus, son of Matthias, a Hebrew by race and a priest from Jerusalem—having personally fought against the Romans in the early stages of the war, and an unwilling witness of the ensuing events—propose to reveal the facts to the people of the Roman Empire by translating into Greek [*c*] the work that I previously wrote in my native tongue for circulation among the barbarians [*d*].

Crucial years for the Roman Empire

2. (4) The upheaval, as I said, was indeed of the greatest magnitude; and at the time it overtook us, Rome was in a most unsettled state and beset by internal dissensions [*a*]. The Jewish revolutionary party, whose numbers and fortunes had greatly increased, reached its peak during the general disturbance; insurrections broke out as agitation increased. So widespread had the violence become that the Empire's eastern possessions wavered in the balance. The rebellious Jews [*b*] were filled with high hopes of acquiring these lands, whereas the Romans feared losing their hold over them. (5) The Jews were confident that their fellow countrymen living beyond the Euphrates would join them in their revolt [*c*] while the Romans were involved with the neighboring Gauls and restive Celts [*d*]. Moreover, there was general confusion after Nero's death [*e*], and several men considered the time propitious to aspire to the throne; the military leaders hoped that a transference of power would greatly improve their fortunes.

(6) I therefore considered it altogether inexcusable for the truth to be misrepresented and disregarded when such momentous issues were involved. The Parthians, the Babylonians, and the remote peoples of Arabia, as well as our countrymen beyond the Euphrates and the people [*f*] of Adiabene, were accurately informed

2[*a*] Menahem Stern believes that as Josephus published his work between AD 75–79 it follows that the historian he refers to wrote in the years immediately after the capture of Jerusalem in AD 70. It is impossible, in his opinion, to state with any certainty whom Josephus had in mind, though Antonius Julianus, who lived during the second half of the first century AD, may be one of the writers in question. (M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism.)*

2[*b*] His animus against those who flatter the Romans suggests that Josephus may be referring to Greek writers.

3[*c*] The work was written in Aramaic for the benefit of the Jewish communities in Parthia. With the help of some Greek assistants (modern scholarship has detected at least two hands of different quality in the finished work) the original version was translated into Greek for the Roman readers and the Greek-reading Jews of the vast Diaspora. The number of Jews in the Diaspora may not have been smaller than those living in Palestine in the second half of the first century AD. The work was also intended for the Mediterranean and Asian intelligentsia.

3[*d*] Contemporary use of the word "barbarian" was not disparaging in any way. In this case it indicates the peoples of Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, and other areas beyond the eastern borders of the Roman Empire.

4[*a*] These were indeed years of political crisis for the Roman Empire. The honeymoon of the Augustan age had passed by the end of the first century BC and the Julio-Claudian emperors who succeeded Augustus proved to be an inferior breed. With the death of Nero (AD 68) the restraints on the political ambitions of Roman aristocrats, ably controlled by Augustus, and with decreasing authority by his successors, broke down completely. During the great crisis of AD 68–69, characterized by political intrigue and murder, four emperors: Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and finally Vespasian — respective candidates of the Legions in Spain, Italy and the Danube, Germany and the Orient, succeeded one another within eighteen months. (We shall learn about Vespasian's succession in Book IV, 655–656). The militant Jewish leaders, on the other hand, were eager to challenge the might of Rome.

4[*b*] The revolutionary party, the partisans of violent change at the time, were the Zealots. Though Josephus recognized the role they played during the various phases of insurrection and war, he did not systematically recount the story of the gradual socio-political rise of this crucial movement. The comment to 204 refers to its early stages and we shall trace its significant rise and culmination to where Josephus' relevant text suggests it. Also consult the following index entries: Judas of Galilee; Zealots; Sicarii; Zecharias; Simon bar Giora; John of Gischala; Eleazar son of Jairus.

5[*c*] Josephus refers to Jewish proselytes from the kingdom of Adiabene (Hadayev, in Hebrew), a region east of the Tigris River on the Parthian frontier of Mesopotamia (referred to again in *War* II, 338). Adiabene gained its independence in the first century BC. Its queen, Helena, converted to Judaism (circa AD 30) with her husband and sons (*Antiq.* XX, 17 ff.). Though some members of the family fought on the side of the Jews in Jerusalem, the people of Adiabene did not participate in the war against Rome even though their Parthian neighbors to the east were looking for an opportunity to dismember the eastern part of the Roman Empire.

5[*d*] The Celts of Northwestern Europe, and probably the German barbarians and the Britons. He refers to the revolts of the provincial Gauls (under C. Vindex) and the allied Batavi under Civilis (AD 68–69).

5[*e*] June AD 68.

6[*f*] "Our countrymen..." Another favored reading is "our fellow nationals beyond the Euphrates and the inhabitants of Adiabene", i.e., Jews outside of Palestine. "We may assume that Palestinian Jews (and Josephus) produced literature for those who could not be expected to know Hebrew in order to read a modern work. That Josephus wrote

through my diligent work of the origin of the war, the chain of calamities it brought in its wake, and its tragic end. It was unforgivable that the Greeks and the Romans, apart from those who took part in the war, should not be told the truth and be exposed solely to flattering and fictitious accounts.

3. (7) Though these historians claim to be writing history, they do not, in my opinion, impart sound information and miss their target completely. They are bent on representing the Romans as a great nation, while they constantly disparage and decry the behavior of the Jews. (8) But I fail to see why the conquerors of a feeble nation should be regarded as great. Furthermore, these writers do not take into account the duration of the war, nor the vast numbers of Roman troops that were involved; or they deprecate the ability of the commanders whose strenuous endeavors during the siege of Jerusalem will bring them little glory in the writers' eyes if their achievements are belittled.

4. The author's feelings in the matter

(9) However, it is not my intention to emulate those who praise Roman might by magnifying the heroism of my countrymen: I will accurately report the actions of both combatants; but in tracing the course of events I cannot hide my personal feelings nor refrain from bewailing my country's tragic fate. (10) The fact that it was being ruined by civil strife, that the tyrannical Jewish leaders were those who drew the might of the unwilling Roman army to the holy sanctuary, and the flames that subsequently consumed it, is attested to by Titus Caesar himself, who ravaged the city. Throughout the hostilities he pitied the people who were left to the mercy of the rebellious parties and delayed the capture of the city time and again; for by prolonging the siege he gave the guilty a chance to repent. (11) But should anyone criticize me for condemning the tyrants and the crimes committed by their gangs of bandits, or for lamenting my country's disaster, I beg indulgence for my natural compassion, which is not customary for a historian. For of all the cities in the Roman domain, ours had attained the highest level of expansion and prosperity, and has now been reduced to the lowest level of misery. (12) Indeed, I can hardly compare the misfortunes of all other nations since the beginning of time, with the calamities that have befallen the Jews; and though we cannot blame a foreign nation for all these misfortunes, it is more than I can do to restrain my grief. Should any critic be too stern for pity, let him credit

Fourth-century juglet found in Hebron depicting contemporary costume

Aramaic, not Hebrew, is generally considered proven by the many Aramaic forms of Jewish religious terms appearing in the Greek texts of his works." (Ch. Rabin, *The Jewish People in the First Century,* p. 1029.) Hence, "the remote peoples of Arabia" for whom Josephus wrote (see same par.) were Jews who lived in the Arabian Peninsula or the Nabatean realm, and spoke Aramaic with some local admixture.

13[*a*] This is given great prominence in Josephus' work and it provides modern historians and archaeologists with a new vantage point from which to assess the background and motivations of the superhuman struggle of the Jews in challenging Roman supremacy.

13[*b*] Such as Herodotus.

16[*c*] Josephus is known for his contempt of Greek historians, a contempt expressed in most pithy terms in *Against Apion,* 1.5 "Those who rushed into writing were not so much concerned with the truth... as to display their literary ability... by the prospect it offered to outshine their rivals..." Another facet of this antagonism is the bitter enmity between Greeks and Jews in the Diaspora long before and after Josephus' time. Anti-Semitism has its roots in this remote period (described by Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and Jews,* p. 377). A classic example of this anti-Semitism is the work of Apion, the Alexandrian Hellenistic writer and orator of the first century AD. Apion participated in an anti-Jewish delegation from Alexandria to the emperor Caligula in AD 39, in opposition to a Jewish delegation headed by the philosopher Philo. A section of one of Apion's books dealing with Egyptian history contains traditional anti-Jewish material and other significant so-called historical data directed against the Jews. Josephus refuted those attacks in his treatise *Contra Apionem* (Against Apion).

17[*a*] Alluding (in *Against Apion* 1, 218) to Demetrius Phalereus, the Alexandrian librarian (or possibly another Demetrius, a Jewish historian), the elder Philo, an epic poet, and Epolemus, an historian.

18[*b*] The paragraphs from this point to the end of the preface describe highlights of the books somewhat unsystematically. The topics mentioned are apparently selected primarily to catch the eye of the intelligentsia and also to attract the general reader. It is similar to a modern writer's Table of Contents. In summary, Book I and nearly half of Book II contain a sketch of Jewish history that covers more than two centuries — from the previous capture of the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes in 167 BC, to the outbreak of the war with Rome in AD 66, almost 250 years later. Josephus' Jewish War may be divided into two main parts of equal length. The first part, running to Book II, 279–283, covers about a third of the whole work. It leads the reader to the excesses of the Roman procurator Cestius Gallus, and the rising of the Jews in Caesarea — prelude to the great revolt and the war with Rome in AD 66. This introductory period and the many centuries that preceded it in biblical history are recorded in Josephus' subsequent *Jewish Antiquities,* a much longer work in twenty "books," starting from Creation to AD 66.

19[*a*] The historiographic records of the early Hellenistic period in Palestine (fourth to third century BC) were very sketchy. "Josephus, through no fault of his own, did not find a single dependable source to use as a guide for the period from Alexander the Great to the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. Consequently, he gathered stories at random wherever he could, such as the Tobiad family chronicles.... However, from the time of Judah Maccabee onward, reliable sources were again at his disposal — such as the First Book of Maccabees and the writings of the Greek historian Nicolaus of Damascus." (Abraham Schalit, *The Hellenistic Age: The World History of the Jewish People,* p. 54.) It would therefore seem natural for Josephus to begin his *War* with Antiochus, namely to explain to his readers what he knew of the background of the three preceding centuries and their remote bearing on the great revolt of AD 66–70. Therefore, he devoted the long introductory Books I–II to events from the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, through the Hasmonean (Maccabean) era, to the Herodian period. The authentic historical background and sequence of unfamiliar figures mentioned in Josephus' text will be clarified in the relevant comments on Books I–II.

22[*a*] Upper and Lower Galilee, as described below.

22[*b*] The term *Judaea* covered the country west of the Jordan River.

history with the facts and this historian with the lamentations.

5. Superiority of the historian of contemporary events over compilers of ancient history

(13) I could also justly censure the Greek scholars, in whose days events of such magnitude took place as to overshadow the wars of antiquity, and who sit in judgment on these current events and deprecate *those who make them their special study* [*a*], historians whose principles they lack even if they show greater literary judgment and merit. The ancient historians they chose the histories of the Assyrian and Median empires as their themes, implying that the chronicles of the ancient historians were not good enough [*b*]. (14) The truth is that they are inferior to them in both literary judgement and merit. The ancient historians had set themselves exclusively to record the history of their own times. Their connections with contemporary events added clarity to their writings, and any misrepresentations on their part could have been detected and denounced by their contemporaries. (15) Indeed, a historian who writes of events that have not previously been recorded, and about events of his own time, should serve as a model and is worthy of the highest praise. A diligent writer is not one who edits the material and arrangement of other authors, but who contributes fresh data and constructs a historical edifice of his own. (16) As for me, though I am a foreigner, I have gone to great pains and expense to present a memorial of these great achievements to the Greeks and Romans. As for the native Greeks, their mouths are agape and their tongues loosened soon enough where any material advantage or legal dispute is involved; but where the writing of history is concerned, with its requisite for veracity and careful collection of facts, they remain mute and leave the task of recording the exploits of their rulers to the inferior and ill-informed writers among them [*c*]. Let us then honor historical truth, since it is disregarded by the Greeks.

6. (17) I believe it would be out of place and superfluous to give an account here of the early history of the Jews—their origins, the exodus from Egypt, their wanderings, the lands they conquered, and the events that led to their expulsion. Many Jews before me have recorded and accurately commented on the epic history of our ancestors, and these writings have been translated into Greek without serious errors by some Greek scholars [*a*]. (18) I will therefore begin my work at the point where the historians of these events and the writings of our prophets left off. Of the subsequent history, I shall describe the events of the war through which I lived with all the details and elaboration at my command. As to the events preceding my lifetime, I shall be content with a brief summary [*b*].

OUTLINE OF THE WHOLE WORK

7. Book I

(19) I will tell how Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, stormed Jerusalem, held it for three years and six months, and was then driven from the country by the Hasmoneans [*a*];

how their descendants, because of their quarrels over the throne, brought about the intervention of the Romans and of Pompey into Judaean affairs;

and how Herod, son of Antipater, brought in Sossius and overthrew the Hasmonean dynasty;

Book II

(20) how the people revolted after Herod's death, when Augustus was Roman Emperor and Quintilius Varus the provincial governor;

of the outbreak of war in the twelfth year of Nero's reign, with disastrous results to Cestius; and of the places overrun by Jewish arms in the early encounters.

8. Book III

(21) I will then tell how they fortified the neighboring towns; how Nero, apprehensive for the fate of the Empire because of Cestius' reverses, entrusted Vespasian with the supreme command of the war;

of the invasion of Jewish territory by Vespasian and his eldest son;

the strength of the forces—Roman and auxiliary contingents—with which Vespasian penetrated into Galilee;

of the capture of the Galilean towns, taken by main force or by negotiations.

(22) At this point I will describe the remarkable discipline of the Romans on active duty and the training of their legions; the dimensions and features of the two Galilees [*a*]; the limits of Judaea [*b*]; the special features of the country, its lakes and springs. I will give a precise account of the sufferings of the prisoners in each of the captured towns, based on my own observations or my personal experience. It would be pointless to conceal my own misfortunes, as I shall be addressing persons who are well aware of them.

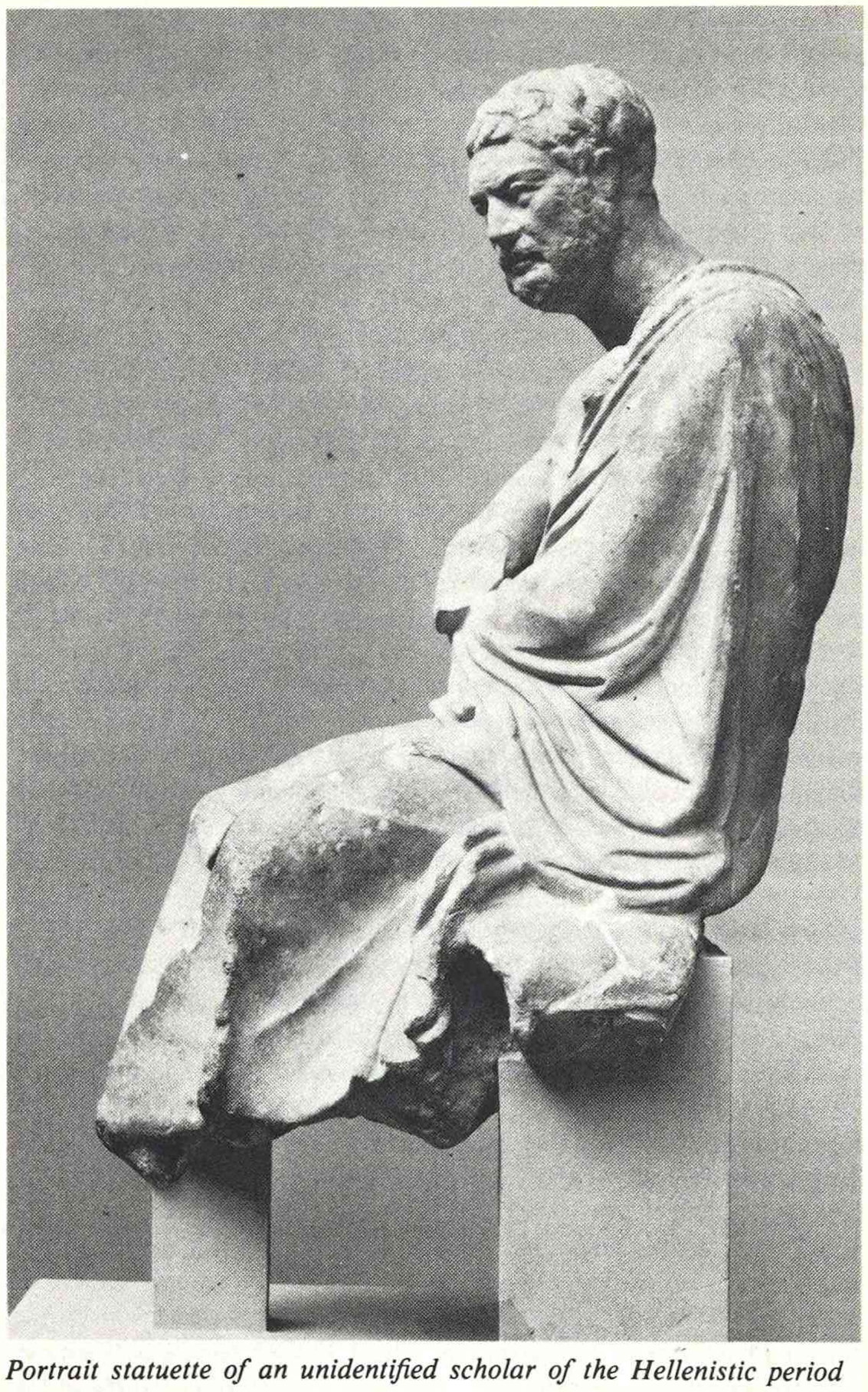
9. Book IV

(23) I will next tell of Nero's death at the moment when Jewish fortunes were deteriorating;

how Vespasian's advance on Jerusalem was diverted by the call to imperial dignity;

the portents of his elevation, and the upheavals in Rome;

(24) his being proclaimed emperor by his troops against his will; the party strife among the Jews following his departure to Egypt to settle the affairs of the Empire; the tyranny and feuds among the Jewish party chiefs.



Portrait statuette of an unidentified scholar of the Hellenistic period

Greek horseman; Seleucid period

26[*a*] "The Mishna defined a precise gradation in sanctity of the various parts of the Temple Mount, from the center outward in relation to the City: the outer Temple enclosure, the outer and inner courts, the ritual objects, all varied in their degree of purity and holiness. M'shna Kelim I, 809, relates that the worshipers sense an aura of holiness from the moment they enter the walls of the City. This becomes more potent as they ascend the Temple Mount... and penetrate into the sanctified area..." (B. Mazar, *The Mountain of the Lord,* p. 106.)

30[*a*] See "Outline of the whole work" (19)–(22) in the text.

31[*a*] *Historic introduction to Josephus' account (31–33)* As Josephus lumps so many separate events and revolutionary changes in this chapter (31–33), we provide the relevant historical background in the following notes 31[*a*]–[*d*]; 32[*e*]–[*f*]; 33[*g*]–[*i*], and trust that they will be helpful to the reader.

The expansion from Italy to India under Alexander the Great had created the *Oikumene* network (explained below), the "known inhabited world", as a kind of political and spiritual empire. It was split up by Alexander's generals into an Egyptian empire under the Ptolemies, a Syrian empire under the Seleucids, and Greece and Asia Minor. The small land of Judaea fell to the Ptolemies of Egypt until its annexation to the Syrian Seleucid empire by Antiochus III in 198 BC. Twenty-eight years later the Ptolemies attempted to retake Judaea and Coele-Syria (the territory situated between Syria-Transjordan and the small province of Judaea). Antiochus IV counterattacked Egypt in 171 BC, took Memphis, Egypt's capital, and captured Ptolemy VI. (See map of Seleucid empires.)

The Jews and the Hellenistic World before Antiochus IV (175–163 BC) Wherever they spread, the Hellenes brought their institutions, particularly the urban *polis* complex—an autonomous city with a more refined life style than that of their "barbarian" neighbors (not a derogatory term in those days). The polis organization and activities included political institutions and the physical settings in which they functioned, a citizen's roll, a city council (boulé), market inspectors, a *gymnasium* for cultural activities, an *ephebeion* for athletic training, temples, courts and a constitution. Membership of the juridical polis consisted of the citizen body, organized by order of the king when the city was founded, or when an old oriental city decided to conform to the Hellenist pattern; that is what happened after this step was taken by the Jewish Hellenizers of Jerusalem (see 32[*e*]). In their secular activities as farmers, merchants, soldiers, etc., the Jews were familiar figures in the universal Hellenist Oikumene, though they differed from other easterners for several reasons. The inhabitants of its ancient oriental city insisted on retaining their traditional cultural or religious individuality, and as citizens, their wealth. Under the Ptolemies of Egypt, and the Seleucid kings of Syria, the Jews felt absolutely no external pressure to change their way of life. They did not, nor were they required to, adopt the polis organization. They maintained their old regime, methods of social organization, and the like. In fact, by his proclamations Antiochus III (with whom the Jews had no quarrel, as with Antiochus IV Epiphanes) strengthened the high priest's power, exempted the Jews from taxes, and gave the Torah commandments the validity of official law. The ferment, which ran counter to the old status quo—and which Josephus does not mention here—was a result of the natural development among certain classes of Jews, i.e., those who spontaneously inclined to Hellenism. They established a close rapport with Hellenist mores, and this resulted in a more oriental pattern of Hellenism, different from that of Greece or Asia Minor, which also prevailed in Syria and Egypt. This pattern characterized the rising tide of Hellenization among the bourgeoisie and aristocracy of Judaea when Antiochus IV (175–163 BC) ruled Syria, Coele-Syria and Judaea (see 31[*c*]).

31[*b*] *The Scribes, Notables, Hassidim and high priests* Another feature characterizing the Jews was their intransigent monotheism, coupled with the belief that their faith provided both an ideal and a norm for human behavior and the sole authoritative basis for Jewish life. The final feature in Jewish life since the restoration of the Jewish Commonwealth, during the fifth-fourth centuries BC, was the institution of the *soferim* (scribes). They were the interpreters of the Law to the populace who abided by the Torah (Law). even if it was neglected at times by priests who were satisfied merely with "official" interpretations. The scribes were regarded as the creators of the Oral Law (Halakha), a

10. Book V

(25) I shall then proceed to describe the second invasion of our country by Titus, from Egypt;

how and where he mustered his troops and their strength;

the condition to which the city had been reduced by civil war upon Titus' arrival. His various assaults on the walls, and the series of earthworks which he constructed against them;

(26) the three lines of the city walls and their dimensions; the strength of the city and the plans of the Temple and the sanctuary; their precise measurements and those of the altar; certain festival customs; the seven degrees of purity [*a*]; the priestly ministrations in the sanctuary; the vestments of the priests and of the high priest, and a description of the Holy of Holies.

I will neither conceal anything nor add anything to the facts that have been brought to light.

11. (27) I will then describe the brutality of the Zealot chiefs toward their compatriots, and the clemency of the Romans toward foreigners; also, how Titus, anxious to save the city and the sanctuary, often invited the rebels to come to terms with him.

I will consider to what extent the sufferings of the people and the calamities that led to the final defeat can be ascribed to enemy action, party strife and famine, respectively.

Book VI

(28) I will not fail to describe the misfortunes of the deserters or punishments inflicted on the prisoners.

I will describe the burning of the Temple, perpetrated contrary to Caesar's wishes, and the number of sacred treasures seized as booty from the flames; the capture of the whole city, and the signs and portents that preceded it;

the capture of the Zealot chiefs, the multitude of prisoners, their being sold into slavery and their ultimate fate.

Book VII

(29) The way in which the Romans crushed the last remnants of resistance and demolished the local fortresses;

how Titus crossed the whole country and restored order; and finally his return to Italy and the celebration of his triumph.

12. (30) I have incorporated all these topics in seven books, and I have left no ground for censure or accusation by persons who are cognizant of the facts and who have participated in the war. For I have written my work for lovers of truth and not only to gratify my readers. I will now open my narrative with the events set forth at the beginning of this summary [*a*].

(End of "Josephus' Preamble")

A. THE HASMONEAN REVOLT AND WAR OF LIBERATION

Chapter I

1. Antiochus Epiphanes' capture of Jerusalem and abolition of Temple worship

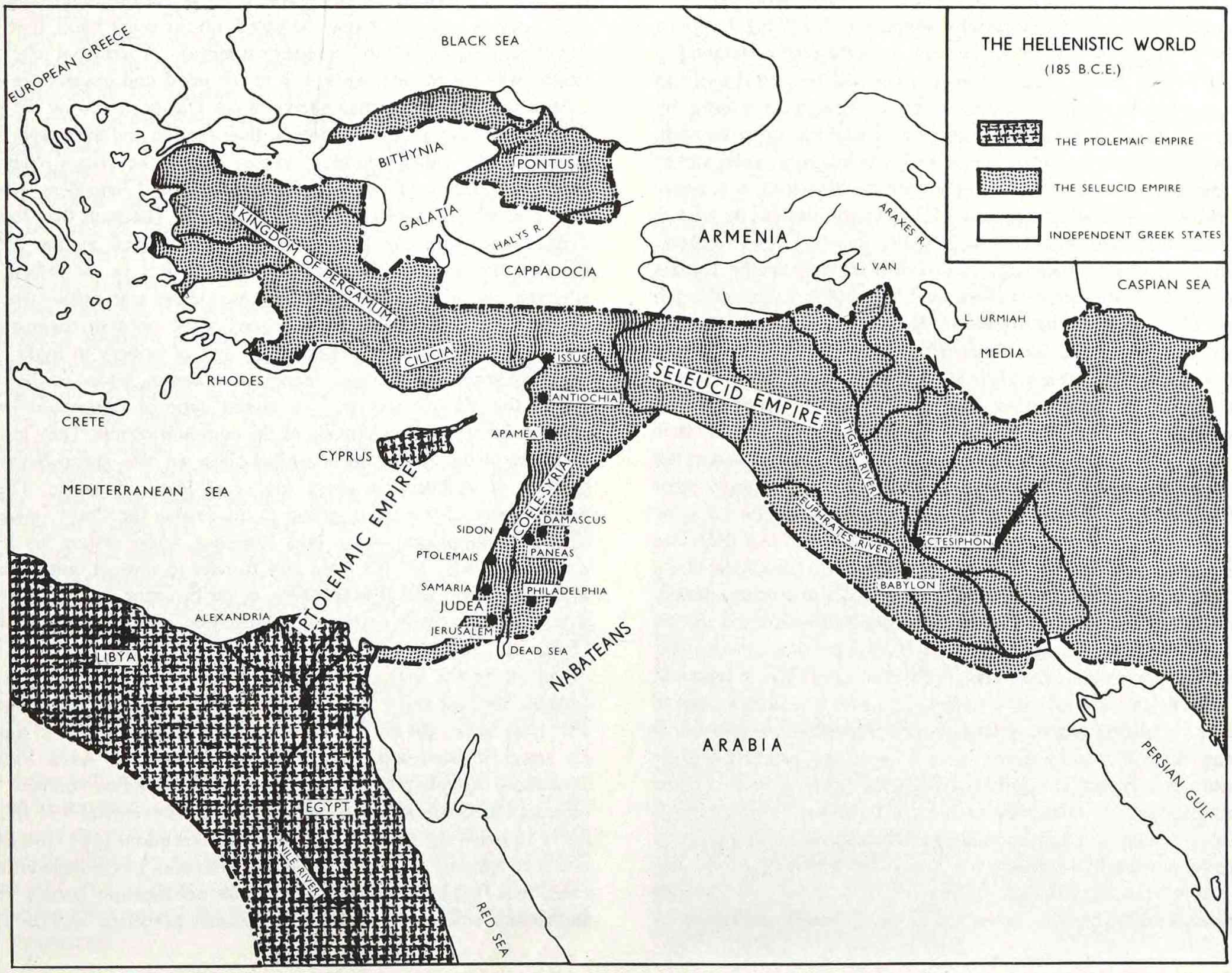
(31) When Antiochus, known as Epiphanes, was fighting Ptolemy VI over Syria [*a*], a violent feud broke out among the Jewish notables [*b*]. They laid rival claims to power because none of the leaders wanted to be subject to his peers. Onias [*c*], one of the chief priests, prevailed and drove the sons of Tobias [*d*] from the city. (32) They fled to Antiochus and begged him to invade the land of Judaea and to use them as leaders. The king, who had long been eager to do so, agreed [*e*]. He personally led a great army and captured the city. He slew many of the Ptolemy supporters and permitted the troops to engage in unrestrained plunder [*f*]. He himself despoiled the Temple treasury and forbade the practice of daily sacrifices for three years and six months [*g*]. (33) The high priest Onias fled to Ptolemy, who provided him with a site in the Heliopolis district. Here he built a small town that resembled Jerusalem, and erected a temple similar to ours [*h*]. We shall revert to this matter in the appropriate place [*i*].

continuation, interpretation of, and supplement to the Mosaic Law, for evolving religious and personal practices in conformance with changing conditions in every sphere of life. This class—the equivalent of the intelligentsia in modern terms (or the sages and Rabbis of ancient times)—by its involvement in questions of law, justice, custom, religion, and observance, acquired a specific ideology. And during the latter part of the second century BC there was a special movement among them—the Hassidim—a religious mystic and educational elite.

From the time of Alexander the Great to Antiochus Epiphanus—a period of about 150 years—five high priests are recorded in the line of succession of the biblical priestly "House of Zaddok," namely: Onias (Honio) I, Simeon I, Onias II, Simeon II the "Just," and Onias III. There must have been others. There is also mention of a high priest Hezkiois, whose lineage is not defined. According to the prevailing custom, the high priest represented the people before the outside world, and all religious and secular affairs were concentrated in his hands. The Oniad priestly dynasty belonged to the very wealthy class. They constituted the highest rank of Jewish aristocracy and were also influenced—though not in their religious beliefs—by the prevailing Hellenistic culture. The life and career of Onias III were deeply involved in the emergence of a division among the Oniads, who were locked in political strife with the aristocratic "sons of Tobias," ranked second in station and influence after the Oniads in Jerusalem. Gentile Hellenism could afford to ignore or patronize prevailing Jewish traditions, characteristics and claims. Antiochus III, father of the infamous Antiochus IV, adopted a positive attitude toward them after annexing Judaea to the Seleucid empire. He affirmed the right of the Jews to "live according to their ancestral laws," thus recognizing Judaea's continuing legal status as a theocratic or temple state. It was free to govern itself according to the precepts of the Mosaic Law under its own high priest, who was endowed with the highest powers, and answerable to the king and the *gerousia*—the Council of Elders or the "Community of the Jews."

31[*c*] *The removal of the high priest Onias III* After the death of Joseph ben Tobiah, his youngest son Hyrcanus continued to support the

The Hellenistic world of the Middle East comprised the Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires, as well as the kingdoms of Asia Minor (top left)



2. Religious persecutions in Judaea

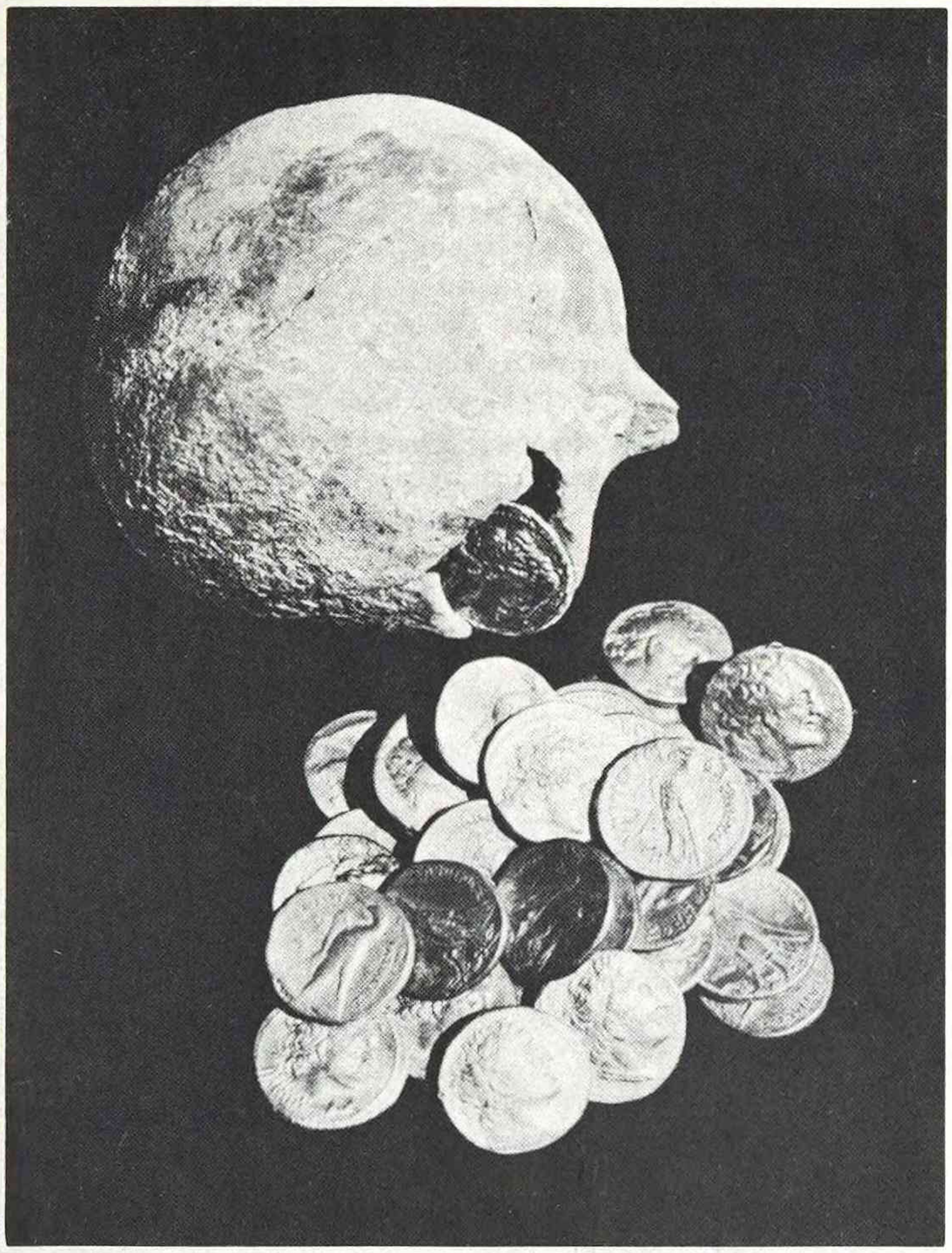
(34) Antiochus was not content with the unexpected capture of the city, nor with the pillage and wholesale carnage. Driven by his ungovernable passions and the memory of what he had endured during the siege, he forced the Jews to forsake their ancestral laws by ceasing circumcision of their infants, and by sacrificing swine on their altars. (35) When the Jews refused to abide by his decrees he executed their leaders. He then dispatched Bacchides [*j*] to command the garrison. Bacchides executed these outrageous instructions with an innate brutality, subjecting the people to every form of injustice. Day after day he tortured distinguished citizens and publicly flaunted the spectacle of a captured city, until his criminal excesses provoked the victims to reprisals.

Ptolemies, while his brothers supported the Seleucids who were taking over Judaea at the turn of the second century BC. They offered the Syrian sovereign plans for political reform. (The Oniad priestly line was also pro-Ptolemaic.) About this time Simeon, a high Temple official, denounced Onias III, who had been ruling as high priest for many years, to the Syrian court in connection with his use of public funds. His denunciation was planned by the pro-Seleucid Tobiads who wished to remove the pro–Ptolemaic Onias. Onias III went to Antioch to present his case to King Seleucus Philopater. In the interim, the king died and his brother Antiochus IV ascended to the throne. At the king's command, Onias had to stay in Antioch. In his absence his brother Jason bought the office of the high priest from Antiochus for a considerable sum. The traditional rights of succession of the House of Zaddok had never been challenged. For the first time in Jewish history the office of high priest had changed from a heritage to a privileged position which any member of the Jewish aristocracy could bargain for and purchase from the king. (The sale of priestly offices was a normal practice in Egypt and Asia Minor during the Hellenistic Age.) Although the country's independence was not disturbed, internal stress was intensified by inner changes: Antiochus had granted the new high priest Jason (175–171 BC) permission to transform Jerusalem into a Greek polis named Antioch (Antioch-in-Jerusalem). Jason thereby exercised his influence to bring his countrymen to accept Hellenistic ways of life, introducing new customs forbidden by ancestral law and absolutely foreign to Jewish cultural-religious tradition. Nothing could have been more revolutionary; it represented a radical departure from the charter granted to the Jews by the former King Antiochus III—a legal framework that did not affect the politico-religious foundation of Jewish tradition, and on which the whole of Jewish public life was based. Not only did the usurper Jason give Antiochus IV the privilege of authorizing the appointment of future high priests, but he also introduced the law and the way of life of the Hellenistic polis in place of the traditional social patterns. This included the erection of a gymnasium and an ephebeum training center for youth—two institutions of Greek education and social study. In the Hellenistic Age these institutions served as the most prominent symbol of its spirit, with sports and athletic exercises taking root in the Holy City. It is relevant at this point to mention Menelaus (*Antiq.* XII, 237 ff.). Josephus relates that Antiochus IV, angry with Jason, gave the high priesthood to Menelaus (171 BC) Jason was unwilling to surrender his office; civil war broke out twice, with Menelaus supported by the Tobiads, and Jason by the other more popular faction. The wealthy Tobiad and other families, who displaced Jason by Menelaus, acted as Jason had three years earlier when he bought his high office. In other words, Menelaus, a stranger who was neither a Tobiad nor a friend of the Oniads, became an official of the Seleucid king. The population was hostile, knowing that Menelaus, assisted by his brother Lysimachus, had stolen funds from the Temple Treasury. Menelaus was under a cloud, and his brother Lysimachus fell in a battle that raged in the streets of Jerusalem. Once again lavish distribution of funds saved Menelaus, who ruled Jerusalem by terror.

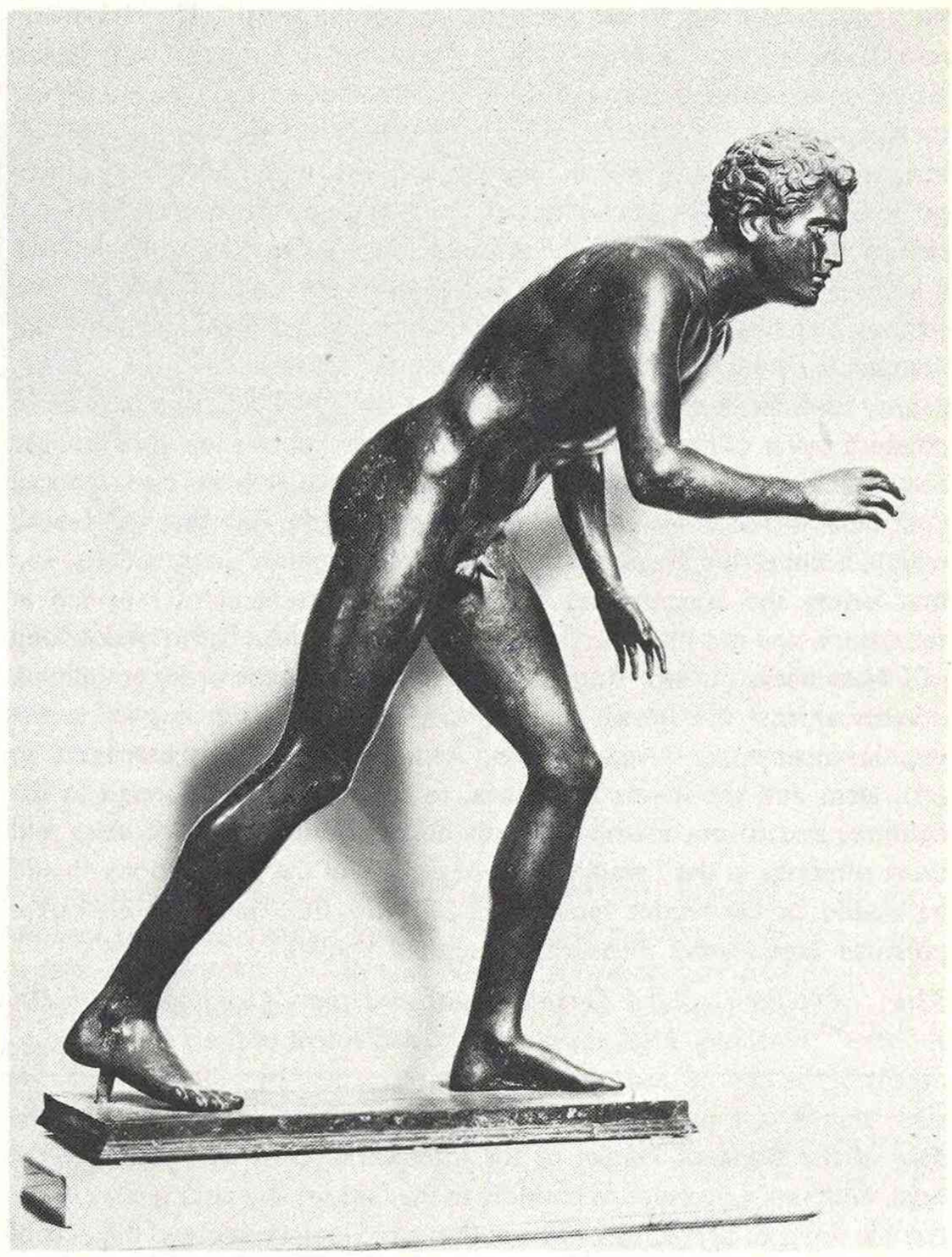
31[*d*] *The Sons of Tobias and their Hellenizing innovations in Judaea*

Josephus' account of Joseph son of Tobias opens with a brief description of the political strife between him and the high priest Onias III. It is necessary, therefore, to supplement and elucidate the background in the light of present knowledge. Scholars have demonstrated Josephus' error (*Antiq.* XII, 175–224) in placing the tale of the "sons of Tobias" *after* his account of the country's conquest by Antiochus III (198 BC). The Tobias chronicle should belong to earlier decades, or to the middle of the third century BC. It encompasses the progress of this aristocratic family whose history is traced back three and half centuries before the second century BC, and whose land holdings, wealth and political power stemmed from their vast ancestral domains in the district of Gilead, west and north of present-day Amman. The dynasty left imposing mementoes of its past on its lands; among them two inscriptions with the Tobias name carved in rock in the caves above Araq-el-Emir. The remains of their family castle are located at Khirbet-e-Sar (some 17 kms. west of Amman). Excavations in nearby Araq-el-Emir have uncovered a large building, the remains of a temple built by Hyrcanus, son of Joseph, early in the second century BC, when he was the district governor. Joseph ben Tobiah, an outstanding member of the pro-Hellenic Jewish wealthy class, appeared on the political arena in 242 BC. He had been appointed chief tax collector over Judaea by royal decree of the Ptolemaic king of Egypt, and became a temporal leader in return for increasing the king's tax income. The Tobiads provided a classic example of the Hellenization of the upper classes, who saw the movement as an effective instrument for the wealthy and aristocratic of Jerusalem who strove for greater wealth and power. The social developments of the period in question point to a collapse of the traditional pattern of modest living that Judaean Jews had inherited fron their ancestors, and their entrance into the free "western" Hellenistic world. Josephus notes that the career of Joseph ben Tobiah "had brought the Jewish people from poverty and a state of weakness to more splendid opportunities of life." He thus emphasized the social change that had taken place in Jewish life as a result of Joseph's activities, as well as those of his family, and other wealthy families in the land. This was expressed in the extensive influence of international Helienism, in all its various manifestations, on their outlook and life; it may be noted, on the other hand, that this did not affect their loyalty to the ancestral religion. Apart from religion, Hellenism was the obvious approach to the good and opulent life enjoyed outside Judaea by the many Jews of the Diaspora and by the wealthy Gentiles. In summary, the Tobiads, their faction and their peers set their stamp on the entire course of events during the critical eighties and seventies of the second century BC in Judaea and Jerusalem. That is the period at which Josephus starts his account. The path that Joseph the Tobiad had been the first to tread was followed by the Jerusalem nobility, the wealthy class and the leaders. But as the reform gained strength, opposition spread among those classes who neither derived advantage from the change, nor approved of the cultural-religious reform.

In the end, Menelaus prevailed by dint of bribery in Syria. But the situation gradually changed. Menelaus' excesses, added to the plundering of the Temple treasury—a sacred national possession—was the impetus for a mass awakening of the common people. They looked for guidance to the Hassidim. or scribal class, an elite group elevated to a position of authority in every matter of law and justice. They later became part of the ruling group in the Jewish theocracy (government through a sacerdotal class). Had Josephus, while writing his *War* and *Antiquities* (XII, 237 ff.), been able to refer to sources that he later had at his disposal (I and II Maccabees, or the historian Jason of Cyrene) he would have avoided certain mistakes. For example, "the high priest Onias III" should read "Jason", as Onias did not expel the sons of Tobias from the City, and from 175 BC onwards he did not live in Judaea. The high priest Jason fought the rival Tobiads twice: once in 175 BC when he sought the aid of Antiochus IV, and the second time when he attacked Menelaus, who shut himself in the Akra fortress of Jerusalem. Josephus seems to have confused the two conflicts, but his reference to Onias is historically based on the events of 171 BC. In his hurry to reach the phase of Antiochus' persecutions (169–168 BC), and in the absence of other sources at his command, he combined the earlier event with that of a later period. He does not mention Jason's role as a Hellenizing reformer. Instead, he associates Menelaus and the Tobiads,



A jug containing Greek coins of the Ptolemaic period



An "ephebe" *athlete of the period; found in Hebron*

who had deposed Jason, with the changes introduced by the Hellenizers. Consequently, later generations regarded Jason as a floating personality, while in the people's memory, the Tobiads and their ally Menelaus, were the implementors of the Hellenizing revolution.

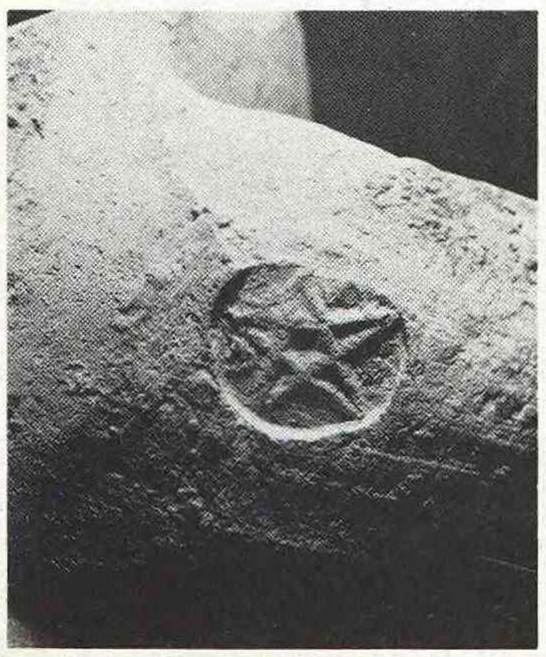
The foregoing historic observations, and particularly the more extensive commentaries to 31[*a*]–[*d*] and 32[*e*]–[*f*], are intended to fill the gaps in the light of discoveries and research in the past sixty years.

32[*e*] *Appolonius' suppressive measures* The sequence leads to the events of 169–168 BC (based on details provided in I Maccabees 7, 12). As further clashes between Menelaus and Jason (the previous High Priest) occurred in Jerusalem. the Hellenizers came under attack from the rebellious Hassidim. Antiochus, who wished to preserve the integrity of his empire's southern frontier, intervened in 168 BC, crushing the revolt and massacring several thousand men. After leaving Jerusalem he sent his general, Appolonius, to adopt suppressive measures that totally altered the status of Jerusalem. He erected the citadel, known as the Akra, facing the Temple; he made the fortress the center of the new polis, and dispatched a colony of foreign soldiers—a *katoikia*—inside Jerusalem. inciting the masses to open opposition. The account in the Book of Daniel relates that Antiochus "shall cause them (the foreign soldiers) to rule over many, and shall divide the land for a price" (Daniel 11, 32). After the establishment of the *katoikia*, Jerusalem became a city of mixed population and the foreigners lost no time desecrating the Holy City. Reading between the lines in the books, I Maccabees (1, 38 ff.) and Daniel (11, 33 ff.), it is evident that the king was aware of the existence of an insurrectionary movement prior to the appearance of the Hasmoneans, namely, the freedom fighters who sought support among the rural population.

32[*f*] *Antiochus' persecutions* Antiochus' abiding ambition was to strengthen his kingdom against opposing forces, among them the powerful reaction of eastern peoples to Hellenism, and the hostility of Rome. As he felt the threat in Judaea he decided, a year after Appolonius' measures (168 BC), to crush the rebel movement by a direct onslaught on the hidden force behind the freedom fighters, i.e., the champions of Jewish observance.

Jews in conflict with the Hellenizers The following is a summary of the historical course of events from this point: The high priest Jason had made a formal request to Antiochus IV to grant the inhabitants of Jerusalem the privilege of being registered as "citizens of Antioch" in Syria, i.e., to enjoy all the social and political advantages of a Hellenistic polis in the Seleucid empire, and not as provincials. Such privileges were accorded, for instance, to the citizens of Acre (Ptolemais, on the coast). Jason subsequently proclaimed the "people of Jerusalem as Antiocheans.... and made new and wicked customs by destroying lawful customs of the state," as stated in II Maccabees (4, 9-11), an important contemporary historical source for these times. After this, Antiochus gave the Jewish Hellenizers permission to "act according to the laws of

Imprint of a seal marked "Yerushalem" of the Seleucid period found in Jerusalem



Inscription of Tobiah on the family tomb at Iraq-el-Emir in Jordan, dating to the second century BC

the gentiles, contrary to the 'ancestral laws of the Jews'". The Hellenistic reform had turned the Holy City of David into "Antioch," a Hellenist city. Consequently, a deep schism divided the nation into two camps; for the common people were reluctant to forsake ancestral customs and follow in the footsteps of the nobility and the wealthy class. Various political, social, and cultural factors combined to transform this internal struggle into an open clash with Antiochus' kingdom. The appearance of a local leadership solidified this opposition to his political tyranny. The struggle was first led by the Hassidim, whose dynamic approach was not matched by military capability. But with the appearance of the Hasmoneans, the unorganized rebels found the military leaders they needed to conduct a war of liberation. It must be observed at this juncture that the Jewish rabbinical tradition, which has misled many historians, ignored vital links in the chain of events, among them the fact that the Jewish rebellion under the Hasmoneans preceded Antiochus' persecutions, i.e., that before the Hasmoneans there was no movement of rebellion in Jerusalem, and not the other way around, as described below. According to I Maccabees (1, 44), Antiochus IV's second drastic order containing decrees against the Jewish religion was promulgated in answer to the popular resistance: "And the king sent out word by messengers to Jerusalem and the towns of Judaea, to follow practices foreign to the country, and to put a stop to whole burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings at the Temple." The beginning of the persecutions should be placed in the winter months of 177-176 BC, one year after Apollonius' suppressive measures (described above).

33[*g*] *Abolition of the Temple ritual and the "Abomination of Desolation"* Josephus' brief allusion to the defilement of the Temple and to details of the acts of desecration are supplemented by other sources: one such source is a passage in the biblical book of Daniel. Whatever the date of the Book of Daniel or the interpretation of its fulfillment, the book contains a message of comfort to the faithful and courageous in the terrible times of persecution. The author of "Daniel" refers to the acts of desecration in veiled terms, as in a prophetic vision (appropriate to the situation but understandable only to a knowledgeable audience): "Forces from him shall appear and profane the Temple and fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate..." (Daniel 11, 31–33). Such an interpretation of the Hebrew text suggests that the "abomination of desolation" or *hashikutz hameshomem,* apparently refers to Ba'al Shamem—of Phoenician origin and meaning Lord of the Heavens—chief Syrian deity whose cult spread all over the area (Ba'al Shamin in Aramaic). The name of Ba'al Shamem was purposely altered to "hashikutz hameshomem." In fact, different names were given to the national Syrian divinity: the Ba'al of Baalbek was represented as Zeus or Jupiter Heliopolitanus—i.e., a Syrian deity in Hellenistic garb. Many scholars consider that the idol placed in Jerusalem may have been Zeus or Dionysos in Syrian garb. Epigraphic discoveries at Scythopolis (Beth-Shean) reveal that Zeus Olympius was worshipped there in the third-second centuries BC, and was regarded as the deity of the Seleucid Kingdom in general (see 65[*d*]). The book, I Maccabees, relates that on 15 Kislev in the year 167 BC "an abomination of desolation" was set up on the altar in the Temple; high places and altars were set up in the cities of Judaea, the scrolls of the Law were burnt, and the death penalty was imposed on anyone who concealed scrolls. Josephus supplements this with the prohibition against circumcision of Jewish infants. Professor B. Mazar calls attention to another remote parallel in Yeb (Elephantine, in southern Egypt), where a garrison of Jewish soldiers had been stationed for several generations. Their temple was destroyed by a native mob incited by the priests of the local god; then it was rebuilt through the intercession of the Persian satrap of Judaea (the episode is described in the contemporary Aramaic Elephantine papyri discovered at the site). However, although they were allowed to bring offerings to the temple, they were not permitted to offer animal sacrifices at the altar, possibly because this contravened local official rites.

33[*h*] *The Temple of Onias in Egypt* It was not Onias III who built this Temple in Egypt (see 31[*d*] The Sons of Tobias), but his son Onias IV (as corrected later in *Antiq* XII 388 ff; XIII 63–73). Onias III, after fleeing Jerusalem, eventually died in Syria. His son Onias IV together with many other Jews, migrated to Egypt after the beginning of the religious persecutions and the Hasmonean rebellion (see 36–40). In approximately 145 BC, emigrants established a military colony in the service of the Ptolemies in the Heliopolitan *nome* about thirty-five kilometers (twenty-two miles) northeast of Memphis. This post guarded the Sinai border from the town of Pelusium to Memphis, and it was here that the Temple was built. Josephus stresses the similarity between this shrine and the Temple in Jerusalem, meaning that it was built wholly or partially with the intention of copying the Temple. This has been proven to a certain extent by the excavations at Tel-el-Yehudiyeh (Tel of the Jews in Arabic) by Flinders Petrie. The building appears to have been a model of the Jerusalem sanctuary, with a tower added. It continued to function until about AD 71. The phenomenon of the Temple of Onias should not be accorded more religious importance than it possessed in reality, since this remote desert shrine was never recognized as "the temple of the Jews of Egypt" by the rest of Jewry, and it should not be regarded as such. The vast and influential Jewish community of Alexandria, that numbered two hundred thousand according to Philo, always prayed facing towards Jerusalem in the many synagogues of Alexandria and Memphis. However, to place the episode in its correct historical context it should be pointed out that several Jewish military villages *(katoikoi)* were established in the Ptolemaic period referred to (in addition to the Jewish garrison at Pelusium, *War* I, 175). This implies that the existence of Jewish fighting units under their own commanders were the product of conditions that suited the foreign policy of the Ptolemies. This made Onias IV and the military colony at Leontopolis, useful at the time in view of Egypt's internal situation. If not for the military colony it would never have occurred to Onias to select this deserted area for a shrine, and the temple might never have existed.

33[*i*] See *War* VII, 421 f.

35[*j*] The mention of Bacchides at this stage is an anachronism, as he appeared on the scene only some years later, in 161 BC (see 47[*a*]). It may be noted again that when Josephus wrote *The Jewish War* he did not possess all the reliable sources of the historical events that transpired between the time of Nehemia, two centuries prior to the Hasmonean period, and the genesis of the Maccabean uprising—that is, of the period under review. It has already been noted that Josephus subsequently corrected this and other mistakes in his account of the Hasmonean wars in the light of Books I, II Maccabees. Many of his corrections appear in his later *Antiquities* XII, 237 ff., and are incorporated in our commentary.

36[*a*] In the course of time this village, located in the Lod district, became the symbol of Maccabean heroism; in recent years a group of sepulchres uncovered near the site of Modi'in were enshrined as the tombs of the Maccabees and honored during the Hannukah festivities. However, although the actual site of ancient Modi'in is not in dispute, those particular sepulchers, though of Jewish origin, bear distinct signs of later Byzantine burial, thus challenging their authenticity and suggesting the need for further research.

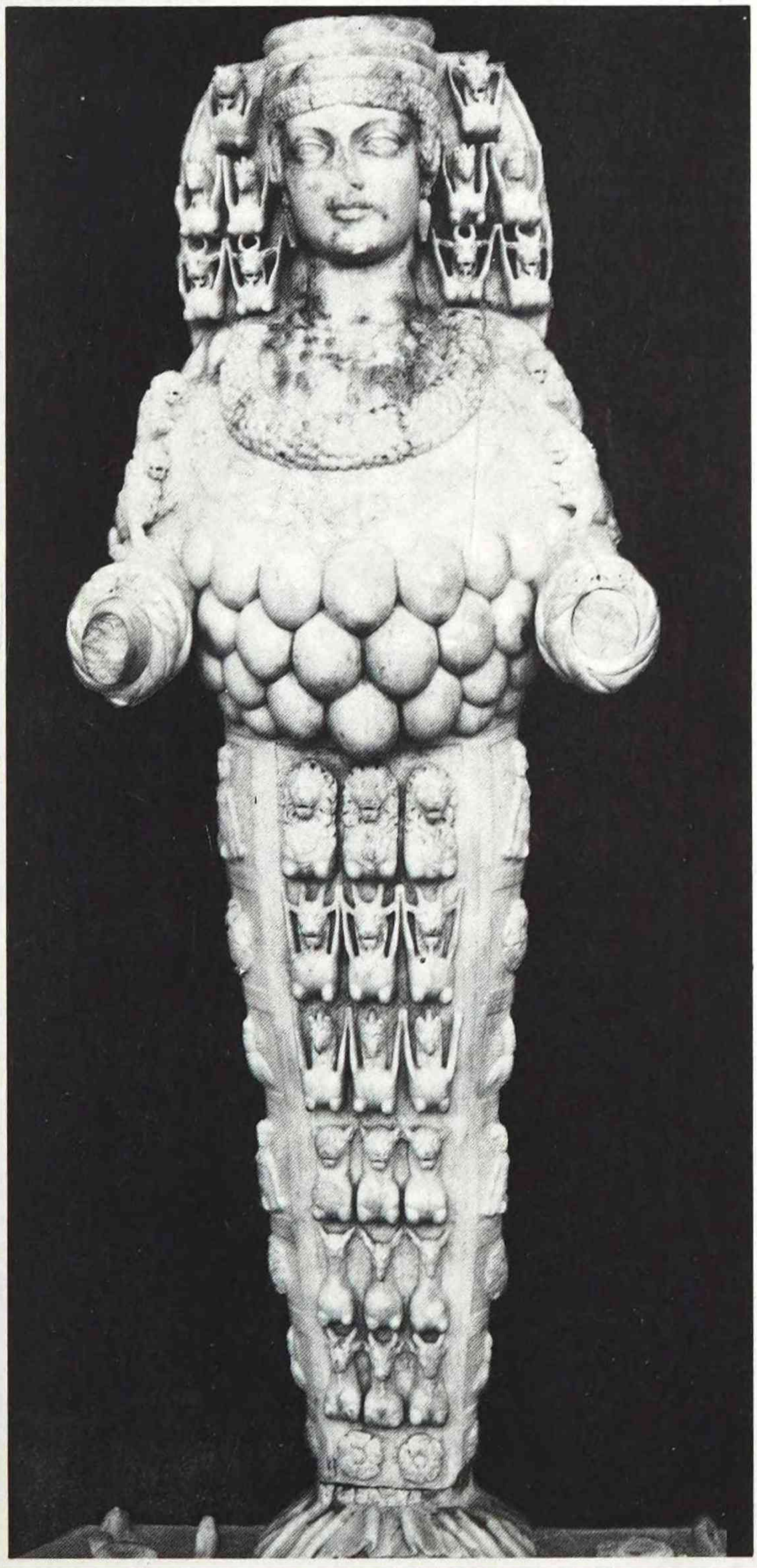
36[*b*] According to *Antiquities* XII, 270, the Syrian officer's name was Apelles. He is unnamed in the corresponding story of I Maccabees 2, 25.

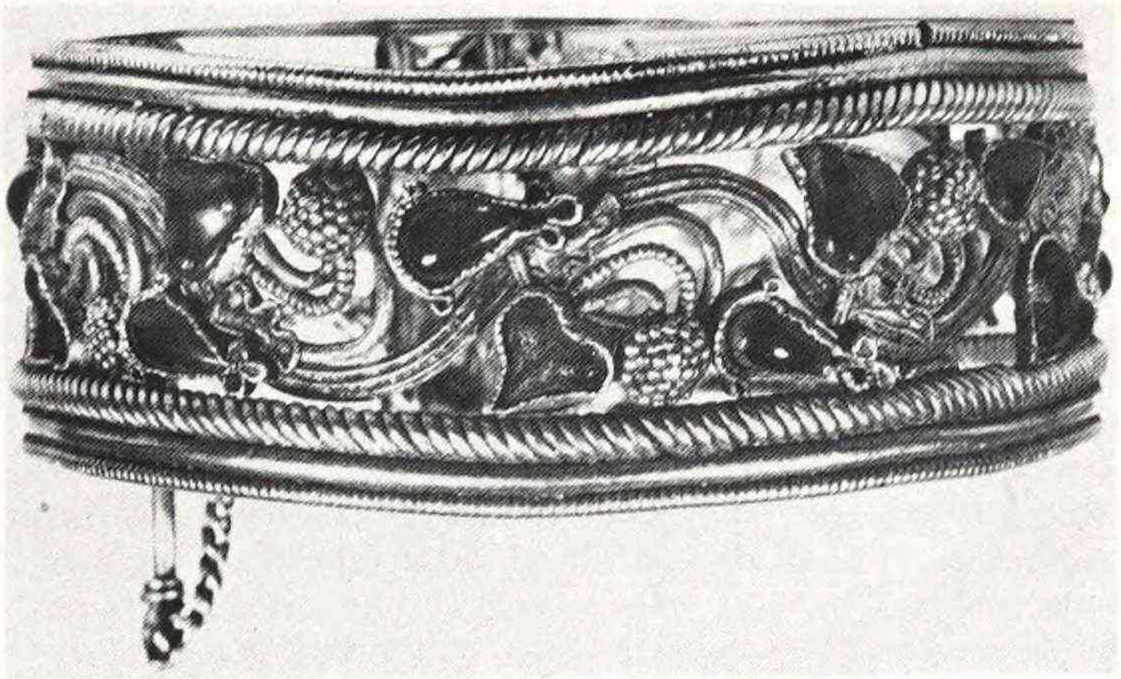
37[*c*] *Genesis of the Maccabean revolt* There is some discrepancy between the First and Second Book of Maccabees, written at about 120 BC, which furnishes the historian with orderly material on the course of the rebellion. According to the accepted story in I Maccabees, armed resistance on a modest scale began when Mattathias, a priest, landowner and leading personality of Modi'in in the Lod district and the Judaean hills, refused to worship the Hellenistic Zeus. He slew both the king's officers who had come to enforce the edict, and a renegade Jew, thus hastening the incipient revolt. This was an act of open rebellion against the king. Mattathias and his sons fled to the Judaean hills and organized guerrilla warfare. Their headquarters appeared to be in the wooded mountain fastness of Gophna (presently Jifna, north of Ramallah, see map). Another version in II Maccabees relates that his oldest son Judas had taken refuge in the hills earlier, and had already begun organizing an underground rebel movement. Either way, the rebels were soon joined by the organized group of Hasidim, a movement of devout ascetics, who under the stress of persecution became the corps d'elite of the Maccabean rebellion. They systematically seized control of the Judaean villages around Jerusalem and cleaned up all traces of idol worship in the area. Meanwhile, Jerusalem was governed by the Jewish Hellenizers, backed by the Syrian troops, and blockaded by the Jewish partisans.

37[*d*] According to the corresponding story in I Maccabees 2, 4, Judas

3. (36) Reprisals were started by Mattathias, the son of Asamonaeus, a priest of the village of Modi'in [*a*], who raised a band of kinsmen consisting of his five sons and himself. He slew Bacchides [*b*] with hatchets, and fearing the strength of the garrison, took refuge in the hills. (37) He regained confidence when he was joined by many partisans. Deploying his forces, he descended from the hills, fought and defeated Antiochus' generals, and drove them out of Judaea. As a result of these successes he came to power. With the expulsion of the foreign invaders, the people willingly accepted his leadership [*c*]. Upon his death he bequeathed the leadership to Judas, the eldest of his sons [*d*].

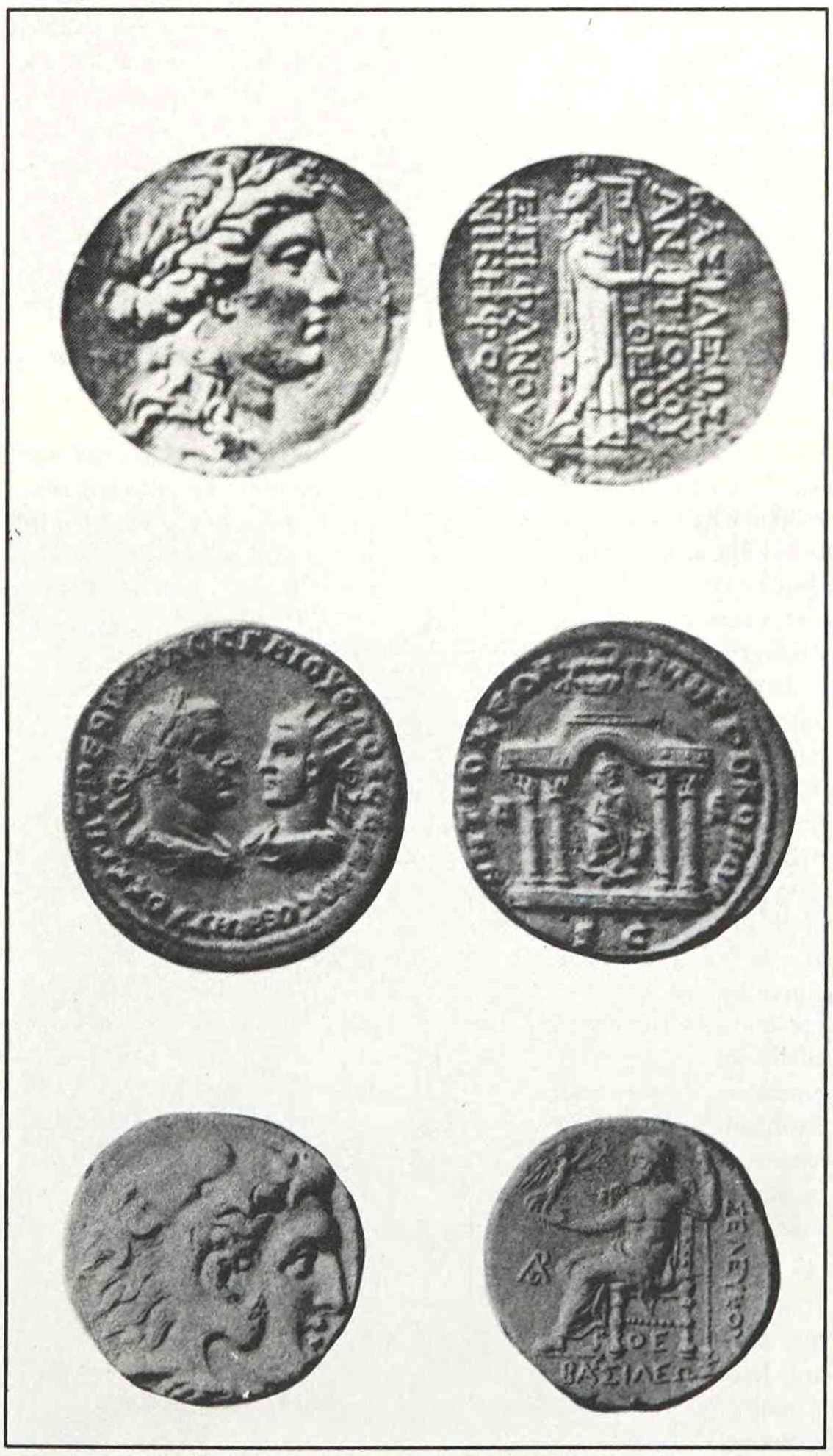
The goddess Artemis (Seleucid period) symbolized fertility; found in Ephesus





Gold bracelet of the first century BC; found in Syria

Silver tetradrachm of Antiochus IV (175–163 BC) showing at top the head and statue of Apollo (holding a lyre) and pouring a libation. Bottom left: Tetradrachm of Seleucus Nicator (third century BC) depicting the god Zeus seated on his throne, holding in his hand the figure of Victory



was the third of five sons, but Josephus' opinion is more consistent with the leading position that he (Judas) occupied in the family.

38[*a*] *Early tactics* In 166–165 BC the partisans spread throughout the countryside. Recruits from the villages, mainly from among the rural priests and working classes, increased their numbers to about six thousand, led by Mattathias' five sons: Judas, John, Simon, Eleazar and Jonathan. The Maccabean's absolute control of the Jewish-populated area enabled several thousand men to move freely within the region against an enemy who was operating from outside of Judaea or from the coastal plain, and to whom the mountains constituted a formidable obstacle. The Jews could keep track of the enemy at all times, whereas the enemy was groping in the dark. As we shall see, control of the area also provided the Hasmoneans with a territorial base for future operations. Thus, while a small-scale nationalist-religious uprising could be temporarily suppressed by a military invasion of Hellenist forces, it could not be totally wiped out. When the Hellenist troops departed, the partisans would fight again under the Hasmonean's command.

Judas' initial battles: The initial battles with the Syrians at Gophna and Beth-Horon (and the pursuit of the retreating Syrian forces to the Philistine plain) were won by Judas and not by Mattathias, as conveyed by Josephus (see 37). The Syrian campaigns failed to dislodge Judas' partisan army from its encirclement of the Syrian garrison in Jerusalem, which was in critical condition. The Maccabeans gradually began to consolidate their position in other parts of Judaea.

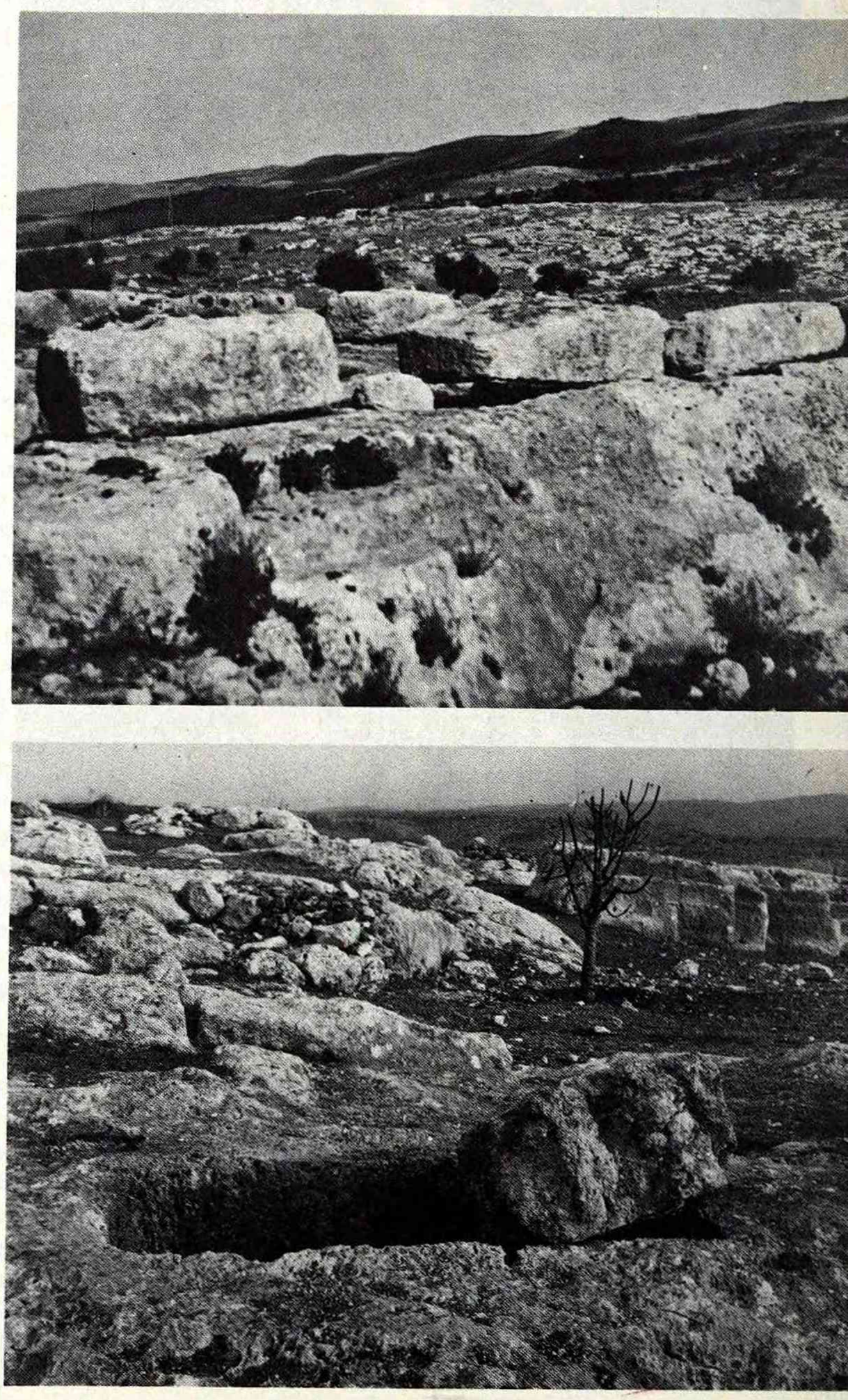
38[*b*] *General Appolonius* Commander of the Samaria district north of Jerusalem, set out to destroy the partisans in 167 BC Attacked at the heights of Lebonah by Judas, now in command after his father's death, Appolonius was killed, "and his sword (Judas) used ever after." (II Maccabees 25). Following the defeat of Appolonius, a new military commander, Seron, was sent from Syria in 166 BC to overcome the resistance movement that had spread throughout the Jerusalem area. He marched down the coast from Syria laden with cumbersome baggage, and used the historic "public road" (*War* II, 228) linking the plain to Jerusalem. This was the mountain road through Beth-Horon, famous since the time of Joshua's pursuit of the defeated Canaanites. The Jewish partisans swooped down from their mountain fastness, launched a sudden attack, and routed Seron's ten thousand-man force. They retreated in disorder to the Philistine coastal plain.

The Seleucids used elephants in the wars against the Hasmoneans. Eliezer was killed while stabbing one during the battle of Beth-Zechariah

4. Judas' initial exploits

(38) Judas [*a*], assuming that Antiochus would not fail to react [*b*], organized the local forces [*c*] and was the first to make an alliance with Rome [*d*]. When Antiochus [*e*] invaded Judaea again, Judas struck hard and drove him back. (39) Encouraged by the initial success, he attacked the garrison in the city—not yet ousted—dislodged them from the Upper City and confined them to the lower part of the town, known as Akra [*f*]. He then captured the Temple Mount, cleansed the whole area and walled it round. He replaced the old, defiled ceremonial vessels, with new ones that he ordered made and brought to the sanctuary. He built another great altar and reinstated the perpetual offerings [*g*]. (40) As soon as the city's sacred character was restored, Antiochus died, leaving his son, Antiochus V as heir to both the throne and his hatred of the Jews.

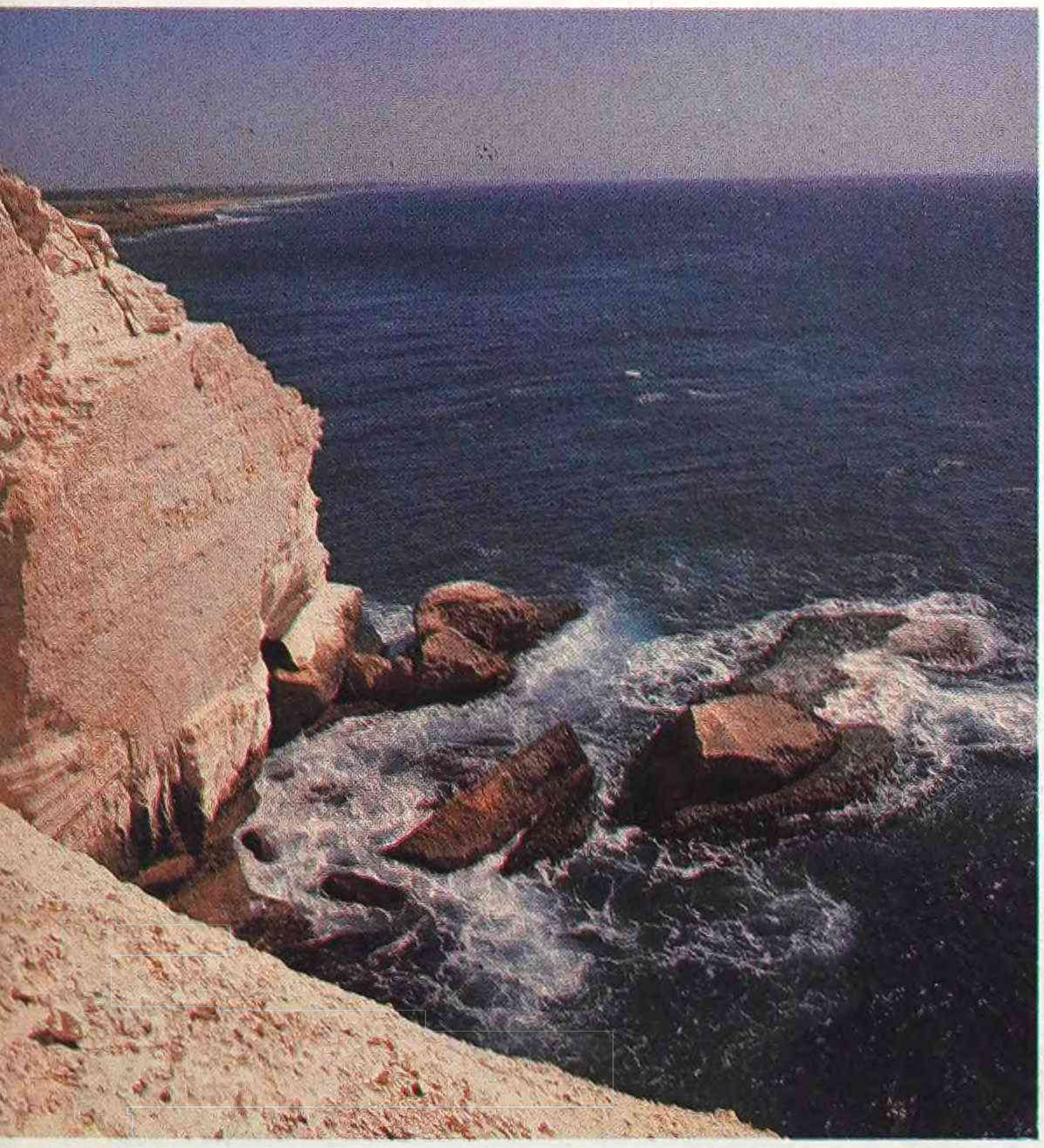
The presumed family tomb of the Hasmonean family at Modi'in, with adjacent quarry site (below)



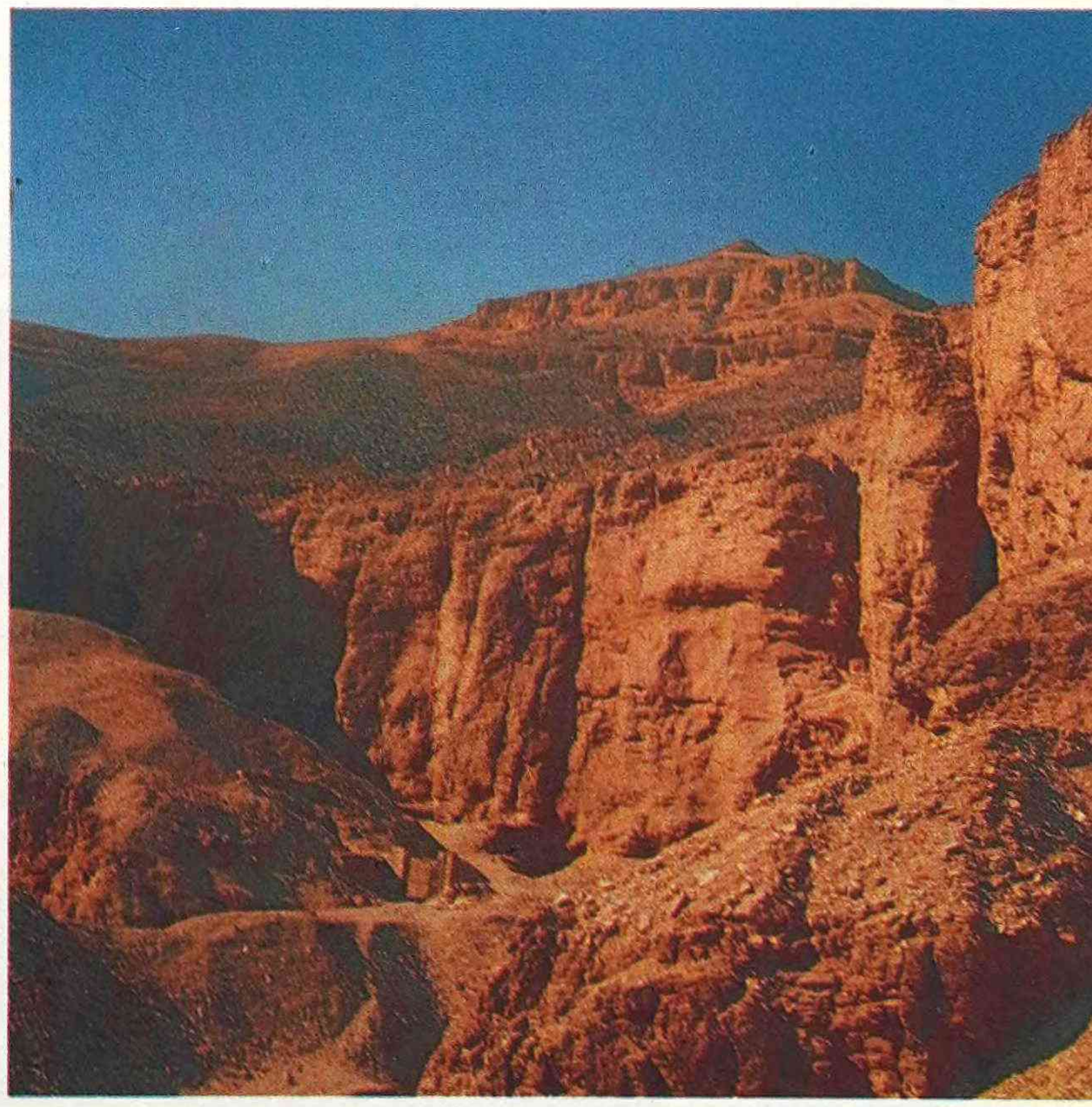
Julius Caesar (Capitoline Museum)

Augustus Caesar (Museum of the Vatican)

The Ladder of Tyre on the northern Mediterranean coast represented the frontier between Galilee and Phoenicia



The mountainous terrain of the Nabateans south of Judaea



Columns, pedestals, and crowns in the forum of Samaria, which Herod named Sebaste in honor of Augustus Caesar

A sailboat such as the one used by Herod to cross the Mediterranean

5. The campaigns in Judaea until Judas' death

(41) Accordingly, the new king collected fifty thousand foot soldiers, some five thousand horses and eighty elephants, and pushed through Judaea into the hill country. After capturing the town of Beth Zur [*a*] he was met by Judas—at the head of his troops—in a narrow pass near the place called Beth Zachariah. (42) Before the two armies joined battle, Eleazar, Judas' brother, noticed that the biggest elephant was fitted with a large *howdah* [*b*] and an array of gilded armor, and assumed that King Antiochus was mounted on it. He rushed out in front of the Jewish lines, hacking his way through the enemy ranks toward the elephant. (43) When he realized that he could not reach the rider—who he assumed was the king—because he was too high to reach from the ground, he pierced the beast's underbelly, bringing it down on himself and crushing him to death. He had achieved nothing more than to attempt a daring deed, holding life cheaper than fame. (44) The rider of the elephant was, in fact, a commoner. Even if it had happened to be Antiochus, Eleazar would have gained nothing by this bold stroke but the reputation of choosing death in the hope of achieving a heroic exploit. (45) To Eleazar's brother this event was an omen of the final issue. Though the Jews fought long and obstinately, the king's superior numbers and fortune's favor gave him the victory. Judas, having lost many of his men, fled with the remainder to the Gophna district [*c*]. (46) Antiochus entered Jerusalem but stayed only a few days because of a shortage of food. He left behind what he considered was a sufficient garrison, withdrawing the rest of his army to winter quarters in Syria.

38[*c*] *The theater of operations in Judaea* Geography was the determining factor in the Judaean theater of operations, where most of the battles were fought along the country's central mountain ridge. Most of the Jewish settlements, including Jerusalem, were situated along its main north-south road, which lies perpendicular to most of the valleys in the area. The intervening ridges provided excellent positions for the Jews, and the steep road ascents on the mountain slopes from the coastal plain to the mountain ridges—where the attackers established their centers—were the outstanding military problems of the Judaean campaigns. To reach the central ridge from their bases, the Seleucid armies had to make a long detour through the coastal plain; these movements were visible to the Jews and to the Maccabean fighters (see map).

38[*d*] *Roman diplomatic intervention preceding the capture of Jerusalem* In the opinion of many modern historians, the "alliance with Rome" relates to diplomatic negotiations which were conducted between Lysias (representing the Syrian government) and the Romans, on the one hand, and the Jewish notables favoring Hellenization of Jerusalem, on the other. Judas and his followers were not a party to the negotiations, as may be assumed from Josephus' text. The clever diplomacy of the Jewish Hellenizers was of no avail, as Judas captured Jerusalem six months later. This inaugurated a new phase in the progress of the war of liberation. (V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews,* pp. 217–218.)

38[*e*] The death of Antiochus IV brought Lysias to power as regent and commander. Following the defeats of Lysias and Gorgias (reported in I Maccabees 3, 38 f), both military leaders, reinforced by auxiliaries from Idumaea, Philistia and the Jerusalem garrison, marched into rebel territory in 165 BC. Advancing at night in two columns, they set up camp at Emmaus. Surprised there and defeated by Judas, they fled to Gezer in the foothills facing the coastal plain. The Syrian camp was set afire, and Gorgia's column at Emmaus retreated as well.

39[*f*] *Where was the Akra?* It had been erected by the Seleucid captors of Jerusalem to control the city and the feverish activity centering around the Temple area. Its site is still in dispute. Some scholars situate it on the upper ridge of the Ophel slope, either on a rocky site just south of the southern "Double Gate," or further south, at a site occupied later by a Hasmonean fortress, remains of which are still visible. Another scholar suggests a strategic place at the southeastern angle of the Temple Mount area, while still others suggest the opposite direction, close to the presumed site of the Hasmonean palace on the western hill overlooking the Temple Mount area, or alternatively, at the northeastern corner of the Upper City on the western hill. It may be noted however, that no Hellenistic coins have been uncovered in the excavations conducted in the Jewish Quarter area (Upper City, west of the Temple Mount) which would be expected if it had been the site of the Akra fortress.

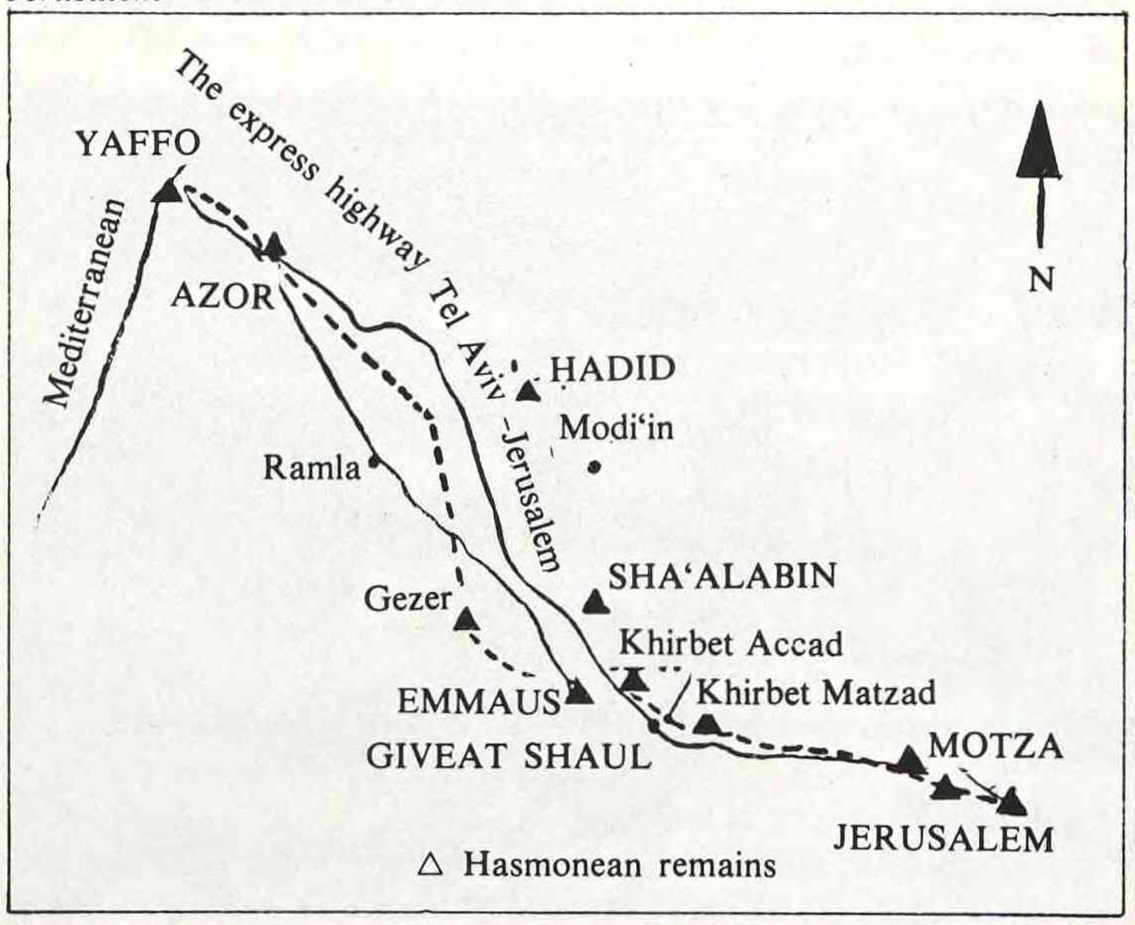
39[*g*] On December 25, 164 BC the Temple was purified and rededicated to Yahweh. The event is annually commemorated by the Festival of Lights—*Hanukkah*. Josephus fails at this point to relate the exploits of the Maccabean brothers after the liberation of Jerusalem. In 163 BC, Judas went to the rescue of the Jews of Gilead, east of the Jordan, then drove the enemy from Samaria, the Jordan Valley and central Transjordan, thus liberating territory jeopardized by Israel's foes. In the same year, his brother Simon liberated the Jews of Western Galilee and consolidated their position in other parts of the Galilee, while Judas helped the Jews of the southern coastal plain and Idumaea against their aggressive neighbors.

41[*a*] An independent account of the battle (162 BC) is given in the contemporary story of I Maccabees 28 ff., and retold by Josephus in his later history (*Antiq.* XII. 376). According to these accounts, Beth-Zur was captured only after the battle. The text under consideration refers to the second engagement at Beth-Zur in 162 BC, where the Maccabeans (i.e., the sons of Mattathias) defeated the Syrians.

42[*b*] "Tower".

45[*c*] The *toparchy* (subdistrict) of Gophna. north of Jerusalem, is identified in *War* III, 3, 5 as the second of the eleven toparchies of Judaea. The wooded mountain fastness had served the Maccabeans before (see 38[*a*]). According to *Antiquities* XX, 375, Judas withdrew to Jerusalem and prepared for a siege. Though he was not on the defensive, he hoped to achieve political autonomy, and thus to transform the resistance campaign into a "war of liberation." However, despite initial successes, the Maccabean position was weak, and they were weary of battle. Judas appealed to the Roman Senate for help, but received only paper support in the form of a mutual defense pact. Rome had not yet become ambitious for the future that awaited it.

The Hasmonean route of campaigns, from Jerusalem to the coast, as marked by the dotted line; contemporary towns and forts are indicated along its course. The continuous thin lines mark the new roads to Jerusalem



47[*a*] Nicanor (I Maccabees 7, 19–31), commander of Antiochus and King Demetrius, who attempted to clear the Beth-Horon pass leading to the coastal plain, was defeated at Kefar Shalem, and retreated to Jerusalem. In 162 BC Lysias again attempted to quell the rebellion in Judaea, but this time he avoided the narrow mountain passes leading from the coastal plain to the hills. Coming up from an easier route leading to Hebron (south of Jerusalem), he was met by Judas at Beth-Zur. He retreated, and Judas' army broke through to Jerusalem once again, driving out the enemy troops garrisoned in the Akra fortress. Reference is made here to an engagement in 161 BC when Demetrius sent an overwhelming force from Syria under General Bacchides. The Jewish forces, now on the defensive, engaged him in Galilee (*Antiq.* XII, 11). Judas fought valiantly in the battle that took place at Adasa (the present Khirbet Adaseh, south of Gophna) in the hills north of Jerusalem. He was killed at Elasa, north of Jerusalem, during the course of this campaign (see map).

47[*b*] *Antiquities* XIII, 10 tells of his murder and the vengeance taken by his brothers.

48[*a*] *The Hasmonean fortress at Khirbet Kassas* In the years following the establishment of the Hasmonean state, the first Hasmonean rulers, Jonathan and Simon, apparently built a more convenient road leading from the populous "King's Mountain" and the hills that surround Jerusalem, to the coastal plain, where it passed near the old battlegrounds. The road eventually linked the coast with Jerusalem, passing through Emmaus (near Latrun), Beth-Horon (Beit Ur) and the modern Neve Ilan settlement (see illustrations). A segment of an ancient road was discovered in that area by M. Gihon in 1977. This road, bordered by curbstones to allow water to flow freely, and filled-in with pebbles and clay that formed the original foundation, led to a fortress on "King's Mountain" mentioned by Josephus. The mountain, celebrated in Talmudic sources as the center of a great number of settlements, and said to have been owned by King Alexander Jannaeus and the Herodian dynasty, was situated north and northwest of Jerusalem (see map).

48[*b*] The reference to a treaty with Rome is anachronistic at this stage (see 38[*d*]). Jonathan approached Rome and Sparta to renew the pact in 143 BC after he had won several military engagements and consolidated the state (see 49[*d*]–[*g*]).

48[*c*] The Greek "son of Antiochus" refers to Jonathan's treaty with Antiochus VI Dionysos (I Maccabees 11–57; *Antiq.* XIII, 145). Antiochus V and VI have apparently been confused, as is clear from note 49[*g*] which outlines Jonathan's gathering strength in the wake of gradual Seleucid disintegration. Many important events took place before the Tryphon episode mentioned in Josephus' text.

49[*d*] The "tyrant" Tryphon refers to the Syrian regent, a pretender to the throne, to whom Jonathan pledged his loyalty and whose battles he

6. (47) Judas did not remain idle after the king's departure. He rallied survivors of the battle, and large numbers of Jews flocked to his standard when he gave battle to Antiochus' commanders [*a*], near the village of Adasa. He gained the upper hand in the battle, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy, but lost his own life. His brother John perished a few days later, a victim of a plot of the pro-Antiochus partisans [*b*].

Chapter II

1. Jonathan's leadership

(48) Jonathan succeeded his brother [*a*], and among other precautions that he took against his countrymen, strengthened his authority by an alliance with Rome [*b*] and concluded a truce with the son of Antiochus [*c*]. However, these measures failed to afford him protection. (49) The tyrant Tryphon [*d*], guardian of the young Antiochus, was already conspiring against his ward, and tried to get rid of his friends. Through an act of treachery he arrested and imprisoned Jonathan when the latter, escorted by a small entourage, came on a mission to Antiochus at Ptolemais [*e*]. He then set out on a campaign against Judaea [*f*], but was repulsed by Jonathan's brother

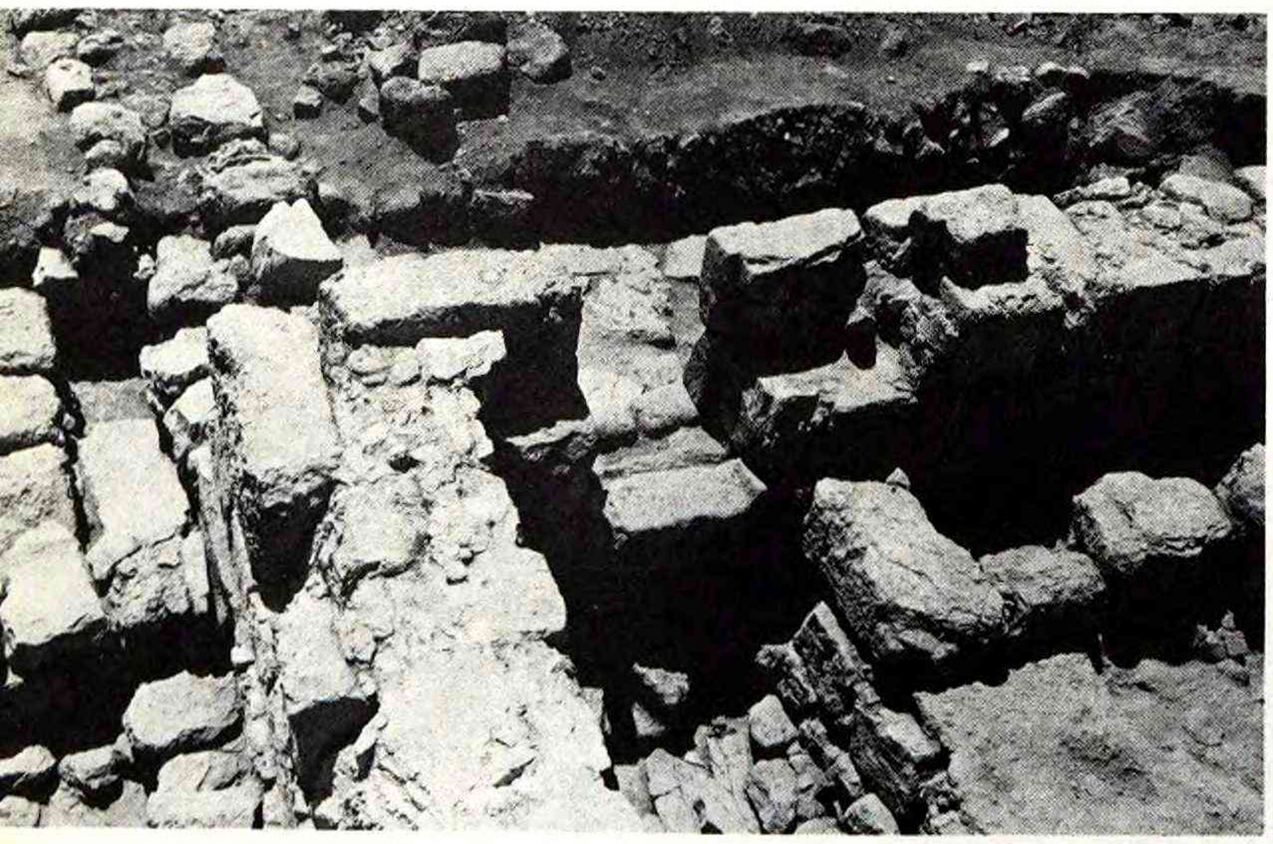
fought at a certain stage. The alliance was short-lived (see 49[*g*]).

49[*e*] *Ptolemais,* identified as modern Acre, was an ancient harbor town in northern Palestine that flourished in Hellenistic and Hasmonean times; it was an independent town in Jonathan's time.

49[*f*] It should be noted that in Hasmonean and Herodian times, Judaea covered the whole area of Jewish Palestine, and not only the biblical province of Judah in the south.

49[*g*] *Jonathan's rise to power and autonomous rule over Judaea (162–142 BC) The story of Jonathan, reduced to a couple of sentences by Josephus, in fact covers a varied and significant phase of the Hasmonean war of liberation, as we learn from I Maccabees 12, 39 ff., and as corrected by Josephus in Antiquities* XIII, 187 ff. After Judah's death in 161 BC, the fortunes of the Maccabean rebels were at their lowest point. Jonathan and his partisans could only find security in desert hideouts

Remains of a Hasmonean fort on the march route of campaigns shown on a previous page



Hebrew boundary inscription dating to the Hasmonean period and identifying the Gezer area

Simon. Angry at this defeat, he put his captive to death [*g*].

2. Simon's rule over an autonomous Judaea

(50) Simon proved to be a most efficient ruler [*a*]. He took the towns of Gezer [*b*], Joppa [*c*], and Jamnia [*d*], which were close to the capital. He also overpowered the garrison at Jerusalem and razed its stronghold (Akra) to the ground [*e*]. He subsequently made an alliance with Antiochus [*f*] against Tryphon, whom the king was besieging at Dora [*g*], before he set out on an expedition against the Medes [*h*]. (51) Nevertheless, Simon's contribution to the defeat of Tryphon failed to put a stop to the king's cupidity. Shortly after, the king sent general Kandebaios at the head of an army to ravage Judaea and arrest Simon. (52) But Simon, though advanced in years, led this campaign with youthful energy. He sent his sons ahead with the veteran troops while he headed part of the army in an attack on another front. (53) He had posted large numbers of men in ambush all over the hill country and succeeded in every engagement. After this brilliant victory he was appointed high priest [*i*], and in fact gave the Jews their political freedom after 170 years of Macedonian rule [*j*].

and fortified places, and all their previous gains were in danger. Jonathan resumed guerrilla warfare and defeated Bacchides' forces. The high priest Alcimus, in whose hands power in Judaea had rested, died in 159 BC, and the pro-Hellenistic Jews were unable to maintain control in Judaea without constant Hellenistic-Syrian assistance. The latter decided that it was best to tolerate semi-autonomous rule under the Hasmoneans who enjoyed the backing of the masses. Without any formal treaty, Jonathan was recognized as the de facto ruler of Judaea, which was considered a part of the Seleucid empire. Jonathan established a government in the town of Michmash, northeast of Jerusalem, and there "judged Israel" as of old, the post of high priest remaining vacant for some years after Alcimus' death. Exploiting the internal problems and the gradual disintegration, Jonathan engaged in occasional battles and political intrigues in Syria. The Hasmonean armies, that in the past had fought the Syrians mainly in the narrow confines between Jerusalem. The fastness of Gophna, Beth-Horon and Beth-Zur, now campaigned far and wide—from Gaza to Syria—in the name of the Syrian kings. The Hasmonean brothers, Jonathan and Simon, controlled a sizeable part of Palestine. When the charismatic Alexander Balas became pretender to the Syrian throne in 157 BC, both he and the ruling King Demetrius I Soter sought Jonathan's loyalty. While each made him extravagant offers, Jonathan played off one against the other. He finally backed Alexander Balas when the latter defeated Demetrius in 150 BC, and in return was appointed high priest and civil and military governor of Judaea. Eight years later, Alexander was ousted by Demetrius II, son of the former king, who at first sought Maccabean loyalty and awarded Jonathan several territorial concessions. Later he threatened war and was defeated by Jonathan at the site of ancient Hazor in Coele-Syria, north of Galilee. This brings us to Tryphon, who initiated a movement to crown Antiochus VI, infant son of Alexander. Pretending to help Tryphon, to whom he was subordinate, Jonathan waged a series of battles, and as a result Hasmonean rule over the country was considerably extended. As a measure of prestige, the old Maccabean pact with Rome was renewed. Tryphon viewed this with misgivings, and the useful alliance with Jonathan came to an end later in 142 BC. As related in the text, Tryphon captured his powerful ally through an act of treachery.

50[*a*] *Simon (140–135 BC) established the Hasmonean dynasty* King Demetrius, who was desperate for allies in the troubled state of affairs in the Syrian court, confirmed Simon as high priest, *ethnarch* (national ruler) and military and civil governor of Judaea, and exempted the Jews from all taxes. This was an act tantamount to granting them political freedom, although the Syrian-Hellenistic government remained the central authority. In 140 BC, the Great Assembly of the Priests and the People declared Simon's office hereditary, as had been customary in ancient times, with the biblical reservation that he should rule "until a trustworthy prophet should arise" (I Maccabees 14, 41) thus establishing the Hasmonean dynasty, and making it a virtual monarchy: the Assembly elected him as high priest, military leader and leader of the people. Judaea was exempted from paying taxes to Syria.

50[*b*] Gezer, an important biblical city and strategic center in the foothills west of Jerusalem. It covered an area of some thirty acres, and was one of the largest and most highly developed cities in pre-Roman Palestine.

50[*c*] *Joppa or Jaffa* (now the southern part of Tel-Aviv) was an ancient port on the Judaean coast that had been autonomous under the Ptolemies. Its importance increased considerably after Simon captured it in 144 BC, when it became the Jewish port of Judaea, and an outlet to the islands of the sea.

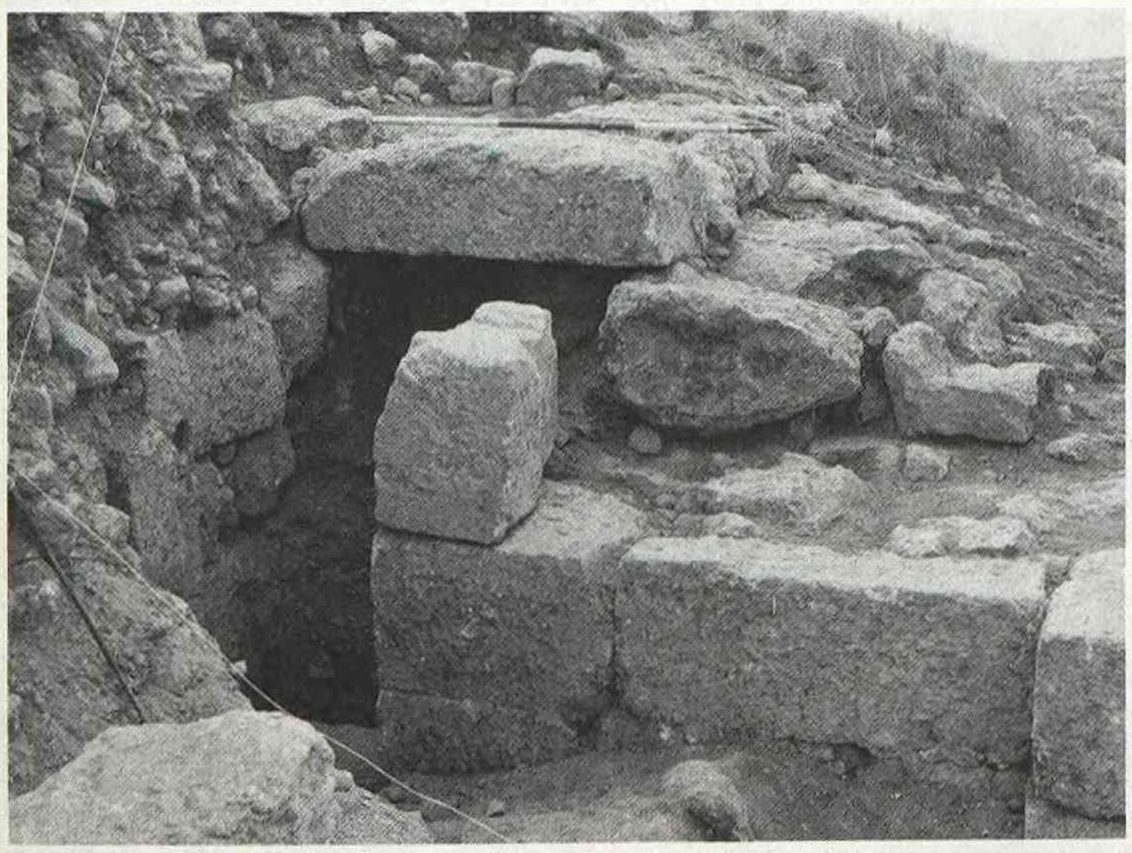
50[*d*] *Yabneh* an ancient town near the coast of Judaea known in Hellenistic times as Jamnia. It was used by the Greek-Syrians as a base for operations against the Hasmoneans and was conquered by Simon in 139 BC. It remained in Jewish hands throughout Herod's reign except for a short period when it fell to Pompey. Yabneh-Yam, a port and suburb, lay on the shore north of Yabneh.

50[*e*] *The Acra* After razing this citadel to the ground in 142 BC to ensure the safety of Jerusalem from Hellenistic dominance, the Hasmonean kings erected new fortifications as well as a royal palace, probably at the time they rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. Remains of a tower and a glacis, as illustrated, may be seen at the top of the Ophel hill (Lower Town); a Maccabean wall also highlights the inner court of the Jerusalem Citadel. Finally, in 1976$7, the massive lower Maccabean layers of the City's western wall were uncovered on Mount Zion, as illustrated, (See also 39[*f*], the Akra).

50[*f*] *Antiochus VII Sidetes* (*Antiq.* XIII, 223) After the overthrow of Demetrius in 135 BC, Antiochus Sidetes demanded that Judaea resume payment of taxes. In reply, Simon announced his aim to reunite the whole of Israel (Judaea and Transjordan) as in the days of King David. Antiochus' subsequent attempt to invade Judaea ended in his defeat at Yabneh. As previously stated, a number of mistakes in earlier sections of the text were later corrected in *Antiquities*. From this point onward the two narratives are closely parallel.

50[*g*] *Dora* (Dor) an ancient Canaanite and Israelite harbor identified with present day Tantura. In the Persian period (fifth to fourth century BC), Dor became a Sidonian (Phoenician) harbor city, and was trans-

The Hasmonean fort at Khirbet Kassas and entrance to the fort were identified by M. Gihon



formed into a Ptolemaic royal fortress in Hellenistic days. Its most important remains belong to the Hellenist-Roman period.

50[*h*] *Medes* probably the Parthians who broke away from the eastern region of the Seleucid empire in the third century BC, and remained in existence for about six centuries after its destruction. They were then identified with the Parthians.

53[*i*] The people had originally appointed Simon merely to be their "leader" and high priest "until a true prophet shall arise" (I Maccabees 14, 41–42). Moreover, Simon's attempt to govern as a traditional high priest was impossible because of his position as head of the nation whose temporal power had assumed many external Hellenistic attributes. The only course open to him was to be crowned in the manner—not in the name—of a Hellenistic king and to take the reins of government firmly in his hands. He was quickly surrounded by the apparatus of government, a bureaucracy, professional army officers, and a foreign service corps that assumed, beside their Hebrew names, Hellenistic appellations. Members of the Hasmonean family were entombed in royal mausoleums at Modi'in. (The identification of this archeological find is in dispute.)

53[*j*] Namely, between 312 and 142 BC. From this point on, a new and glorious era of expansion and universal prestige throughout the Jewish Diaspora began for Jerusalem. (Map of Jerusalem in Hasmonean times.)

54[*a*] Ptolemy, son of Habubu was a Judaized Idumaean and commander of Simon's army. The assassination took place in the Hasmonean winter palace in Jericho. This is described in 417 ff and illustrations.

56[*b*] The stronghold of *Doq,* also known as Dagon, had been erected by Ptolemy (son of Habubu) on Simon's orders on the precipitous ledge of a mountain overlooking Jericho from the northwest. Its inaccessibility may be estimated from Ptolemy's threats to throw Hyrcanus' mother over the walls and into the chasm whenever he tried to scale the height. The site, later known as Jebel Qarantal, was the favorite wilderness retreat of Byzantine monks since the fourth century AD, and they associate it with Jesus' Mount of Temptation (Matthew 4, 1 ff; see illustration). In the twelfth century the Templars transformed its caves into their Castellum Doq.

60[*a*] The sabbatical year or *Shemitta,* ordained in Leviticus 25, 4.

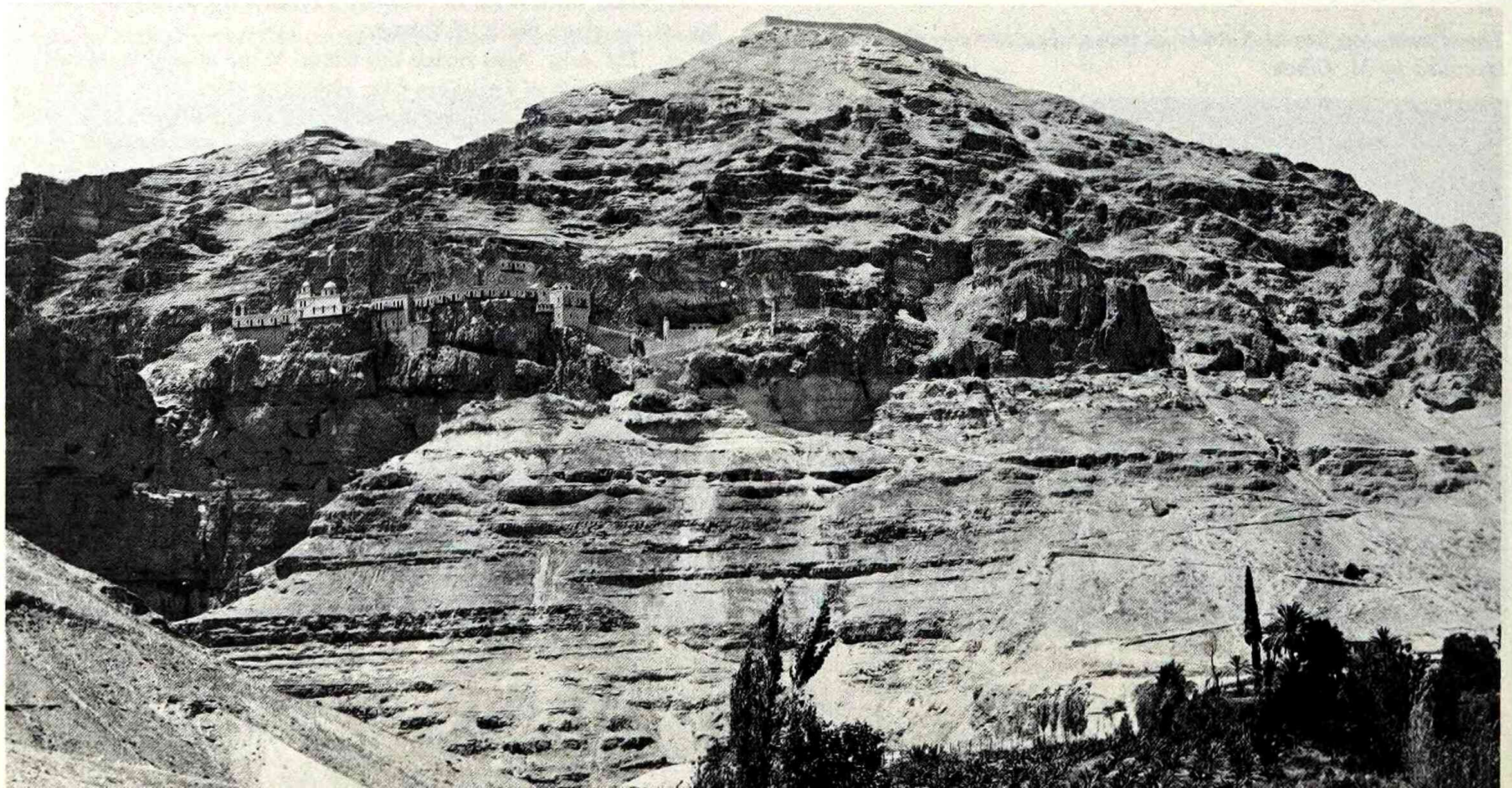
60[*b*] He fled across the Jordan River to Rabbath-Ammon, then called Philadelphia, the present-day Amman, capital of the Arab Kingdom of Jordan.

The Hasmonean stronghold of Doq, northwest of Jericho, now known as Jebel Qarantal, was later a favorite retreat of Byzantine monks

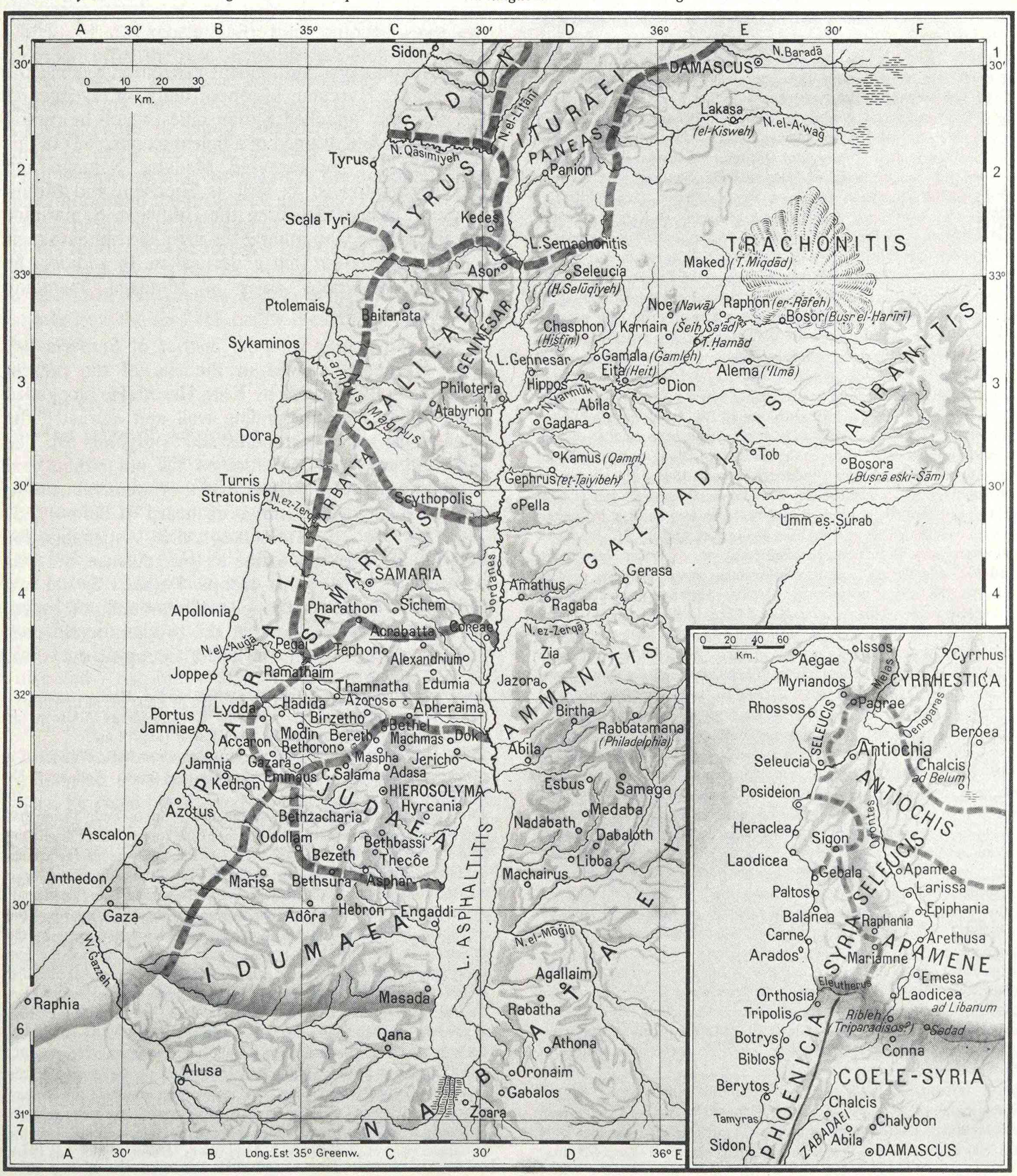
3. John Hyracanus' opposition to Ptolemy, his brother-in-law

(54) Simon too, fell victim to a plot laid by his son-in-law, Ptolemy [*a*], and was assassinated at a banquet. After locking up Simon's wife and two of his sons, Ptolemy sent a gang to kill the third son, John, also called Hyrcanus. (55) Forewarned of their coming, the youth hastened to the city, confident that the people would support him, both out of respect for his father's achievements, and because they hated Ptolemy's lawlessness. Ptolemy also rushed to gain entry by another gate, but was repelled by the people who had quickly admitted Hyrcanus. (56) Ptolemy immediately withdrew to one of the forts above Jericho called Dagon [*b*]. Hyrcanus, after gaining the high priest's office formerly held by his father, duly offered sacrifice to God and started after Ptolemy at once in order to rescue his mother and brothers.

4. (57) He attacked the fort with vigor, but whenever Ptolemy felt hard-pressed, he pushed Hyrcanus' mother and brothers onto the ramparts and had them tortured before his eyes, threatening to hurl them down if he did not withdraw quickly. (58) Pity and fear, rather than anger overwhelmed Hyrcanus each time, but his mother did not yield to the torments or the threat of death. With outstretched arms she implored her son not to be moved by her sufferings and not to spare the tormentor: she preferred to die at Ptolemy's hands rather than live, as long as he would pay for the wrongs he had done to their house. (59) Heartened by his mother's heroism and responsive to her entreaties, he would rush to the assault; but when he saw her being beaten and tormented he was unnerved and overcome by emotion. (60) And so the siege dragged on until the "year of rest" [*a*] arrived, observed as a period of repose every seventh year, like the seventh day of the week. Relieved of the siege, Ptolemy murdered the mother and brothers and fled to Zeno, surnamed Cotylas, the tyrant of Philadelphia [*b*].



Southern Syria and Judaea during the Hasmonean period. The Seleucid kingdom is shown in the right-hand section



61[*a*] The sum involved is believed by some to be equivalent to about five and a half million dollars at the going rate of silver exchange. The corresponding account in *Antiquities* XIII, 249 relates that he opened the tomb after Antiochus' departure. This tomb was attributed to David by tradition, but not verified archaeologically. The presence of a treasure of this magnitude suggests a sacred treasury annexed to some underground stores of the sanctuary, or close to it. The enlistment of foreign auxiliaries by the Jewish army had significant military results in the future, both under the Hasmonean princes and in the days of Herod.

62[*a*] *Antiquities* XIII, 250 tells a more credible story in which John Hyrcanus joined the Hellenistic monarch in his expedition against the Parthians (also called "Medes") in 130 BC.

63[*b*] *A systematic plan of conquest* Hyrcanus' campaign against the so-called "Syrian cities" took place after the death of Antiochus VII Sidetes in 129 BC. These included the cities of southern and northern Palestine that had not, until then, been incorporated into the liberated Jewish realm by the earlier Hasmoneans. In fact, it was only under Hyrcanus that the planned, systematic conquest of Palestine began. He went to war with the peoples surrounding Judaea, taking Madeba in Moab and Samaga (both in Transjordan). (Madeba was famous later for a fifth century AD mosaic map of Palestine.) He captured Shechem and destroyed the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim. (See 64[*a*].)

63[*c*] *The Samaritans* were a Jewish sect living in Samaria (central Palestine) who opposed the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple in Nehemiah's time (fifth century BC, Nehemiah 4, 2) and built their own temple on Mount Gerizim. Hyrcanus' conquest of Samaria was effected in two stages: first the Samaritan ethnos (nation) was subdued, and their sanctuary ceased to function; nevertheless they retained their national and religious consciousness, as is evident from later developments.

63[*d*] Hyrcanus' war in southern Palestine had special historical significance. He overran the entire country of Idumaea, or southern Palestine, an area famed for its biblical Hebrew tribesmen before the fall of the Judaean Kingdom in the sixth century BC. It had since been overrun by the Idumaeans and was later populated by a number of Hellenistic towns, such as Adoraim (identified with Dura, south of Hebron) and Maresha; excavations conducted between 1898–1900 revealed a third century BC Hellenistic city with intersecting streets laid at right angles, and containing a sacred area in the eastern quarter. Numerous opened cave sepulchers dating from the second century BC, the larger ones adorned with paintings, as illustrated, are of special importance. The 132 *columbaria,* resembling dovecotes, were apparently used to preserve the ashes of cremated bodies. Hyrcanus compelled the Idumaeans to proselytize (*Antiq.* XIII, 257), thus eliminating the danger of sudden raids which frequently threatened Judaea from the south.

64[*a*] *Hyrcanus' occupation of Samaria and the coastal plain (126–104 BC)* Josephus might have added that the city of Samaria was founded later by Herod though it had a past history. The subjection of the Samaritans was politically significant, not only as part of Hyrcanus' expansionist drive that followed in the footsteps of Simon's policy, but also because the Samaritans were Judaea's second, though minor foe (after their Hellenist neighbors), and had often harrassed the Jews from the north. Although they were defeated by Hyrcanus and their temple was destroyed, the Samaritans refused to merge with the Jews and held fast to their sectarian exclusivism. Hyrcanus expanded Judaea's borders to the cities of the coastal plain — Joppa, Gezer, Appolonia, Yavneh-Yam, and eventually Ashdod. He then set out to destroy the obstacles separating the province of Judaea from the Galilee, i.e., the cities of Samaria, Straton's Tower and Scythopolis, settled with Hellenist colonizers. The ancient city of Samaria, which had been the capital of the Kingdom of Israel until the eighth century BC, had shrunk to insignificance by the sixth-fifth centuries BC. It was revived in Hellenistic times when the walls of the ancient Israelite acropolis were still in use; they were supplemented by immense towers, as seen in the illustration. A new wall, built in the second century BC, was destroyed by John Hyrcanus after his arduous siege of the city. The subsequent history of Samaria-Sebaste is noted in 403[*f*].

64[*b*] The Hasmoneans used two appellations: in addition to their Hebrew names they also adopted Greek names, such as Antigonus, Aristobulus, and Alexander—the more common names assumed even by Jews in the course of Jewish history. Furthermore, as the reader may

B. THE HEYDAY OF THE HASMONEANS

5. War with Antiochus VII Sidetes

(61) Smarting under the blows inflicted by Simon, Antiochus Sidetes invaded Judaea. He encamped before Jerusalem and laid siege to Hyrcanus; the latter opened the sepulcher of David, who had been the wealthiest of kings, drew out more than three thousand talents, and paid Antiochus three hundred to raise the blockade [*a*]. He used the surplus to pay a mercenary force—the first Jewish ruler to start this practice.

6. (62) Antiochus' subsequent expedition against the Medes gave Hyrcanus his opportunity for revenge [*a*]. He promptly attacked Syrian cities which he rightly expected to find drained of efficient troops. (63) In this campaign [*b*], he captured Medaba, Samaga and neighboring towns, as well as Shechem and Mount Gerizim, besides defeating the Cuthaean Samaritans [*c*], the people who inhabit the area surrounding their temple modeled on that of Jerusalem. In addition, he captured numerous cities in Idumaea, including Adoraim and Marisa [*d*].

7. (64) Advancing into the district of Samaria [*a*], John Hyrcanus arrived at the site of the present Sebaste, a city founded by King Herod. He blockaded it by building a surrounding wall and entrusted the siege to his sons Aristobulus and Antigonus [*b*]. The siege put relentless pressure on the inhabitants and caused such a dire famine that they were reduced to eating food they had not even heard of before. (65) They appealed to Antiochus, called Aspendius, for help [*c*]. He agreed to come to their defense, but was defeated by Aristobulus' troops. Pursued by the two brothers as far as Scythopolis [*d*], Antiochus escaped. On their return to Samaria, the brothers again confined its people within the walls, occupied the town,

have noticed, Josephus' Greek text often renders Hebrew names of places and people in their Hellenistic form, such as Adoreon for Adoraim (63[*b*]), Scythopolis for Beth Shean (65[*d*]), etc.

65[*c*] *Aspendius,* or of Aspendus; but *Antiquities* XIII, 276 carries a correction substituting his half brother and rival, Antiochus IX Cyzicenos.

65[*d*] *Scythopolis,* the ancient Canaanite town of Beth Shean that flourished on an elevation (Tell el-Husn) in the Jordan Valley during the Israelite period. It was deserted circa 700 BC, and was not reoccupied until the Hellenistic period when the main part of the town moved down into the valley. Level III in the excavations of ancient Beth-Shean is attributed to the Hellenistic and Roman periods, but little is known of the city's plan in Hellenistic times. Scythopolis was founded anew by the Ptolemies in the third century BC under the protection of the god Dionysus. The cult of this deity, protector of the Ptolemies, was intended to serve as a spiritual center for the new city, while the later cult of Zeus Olympius sought to achieve the spiritual unity of the Seleucid Kingdom in general (in which Scythopolis was included). Traces of a colonnaded street and remains of a Hellenistic temple, dating to the third century BC and dedicated to Zeus Olympius, have been found in the *temenos* on the summit of ancient Beth Shean. The temple was rebuilt in the Roman period and dedicated to Zeus Akraios. Scythopolis' prosperity reached its greatest peak in Roman times when it became the capital of the Decapolis (ten town) province. All the towns, except Scythopolis (Beth

razed it to the ground, and reduced its inhabitants to slavery. (66) As success followed success, they lost none of their ardor and marched their forces as far as Scythopolis, overran that region and ravaged all the land south of Mount Carmel [*e*].

8. John's prosperous reign and prophetic gifts

(67) Envious of the continued successes of John and his sons, his countrymen turned against him. As they gathered in numbers, the opposition that began as agitation developed into open war and ended in the defeat of the rebels. (68) John enjoyed quiet and prosperity for the rest of his life [*a*], and after thirty-three years of admirable administration, he died and left five sons, truly as blessed as ever a man was. He had no cause to blame fortune. He was the only man to enjoy the three greatest privileges concurrently—the supreme command of the nation, the high priesthood and the prophetic gift. (69) He was in such close contact with the deity that he was never ignorant of the future: thus he foresaw and foretold that his two eldest sons would not retain control of the affairs of state. Their downfall is a story worth relating, as it shows how far they fell below their father's good fortune [*b*].

Chapter III

1. The reign of Aristobulus I

(70) After the death of Hyrcanus, the eldest of his sons, Aristobulus, turned the government into a monarchy. He was the first king four hundred seventy one years and three months [*a*] after the return from the Babylonian exile. (71) He assigned equal honors to his brother Antigonus, who was next in seniority, and of whom he seemed very fond. He shackled the other brothers in chains. His mother, whom his father had left as mistress of the realm, and who had accordingly disputed Aristobulus' claim to authority, he confined in fetters; he was brutal enough to let her die of starvation in a dungeon.

2. (72) However, retribution overtook him [*a*] when, influenced by slanderous tales of unscrupulous courtiers, he killed his beloved brother Antigonus whom he had made a partner of his kingdom. At first he disbelieved their tales, both out of affection for his brother, and because he attributed their lies to jealousy. (73) Aristobulus happened to be ill one day when Antigonus returned in pomp from a campaign to attend the Feast of Tabernacles at which, according to ancestral custom, tabernacles are erected in God's honor [*b*]. At the close of the ceremonies Antigonus, in full regalia and surrounded by his bodyguard, went up to the Temple to offer earnest prayers for his brother's recovery. (74) The unscrupulous courtiers told the king of Antonius' regal, confident bearing and military escort, improper for a king's subject. He was coming with a large troop to murder Aristobulus, they said, for he disdained the mere honors of royalty when he could occupy the throne.

Shean) were situated east of the river Jordan. At its zenith, Scythopolis had a five and a half kilometer (three and a half mile) circumvallation.

66[*e*] This was the fertile plain of Jezreel with its numerous towns, stretching from Beth Shean to the Mediterranean coast at Mount Carmel. This also implies Hyrcanus' virtual conquest of most of Galilee.

68[*a*] *The new trends in Hasmonean times* It is important to sum up the changing political and social trends in Judaea. The first Hasmoneans had been national leaders drawn from the people. But no sooner had the sons of the first Hasmoneans ceased to be leaders of Judaea in rebellion, or in the following stage, semi-autonomous officials of the Seleucids, than they undertook the political obligations of dynastic and independent status. They manifested the trappings of independent power and appeared before their subjects crowned with Hellenistic splendor, like other oriental monarchs who established kingdoms on the ruins of the disintegrating Seleucid empire. As the international status of John Hyrcanus grew, so did the pomp and circumstance of his court. Though pro-Hellenism had lost all politica! significance in Judaea, socially the Hasmonean princes were transformed into a semi-Hellenized, secular, military dynasty. Nevertheless, their Jewish piety was never in question as it had been with the Hellenizers in the days of Antiochus IV. The Hasmonean state remained a theocracy in which the royal title was an ornament to impress foreigners. However, Hyrcanus was the first to import mercenaries from abroad (*Antiq.* XIII, 249) who received regular payment from the ruler, and who were alien to the local people and the national interest. Hyrcanus plundered the sacred "tomb of David" in order to pay those expenses (see 61[*a*]). These two acts marked the beginning of the rift between the crown and the people.

69[*b*] *Why did the Pharisees disavow Hyrcanus?* Josephus was unable to analyze other political trends underlying John's reign. Although John was somewhat limited by the *Hever Hayehudim* (General Assembly) or Sanhedrin of Judaea, which consisted of priests and lay members, his reign grew increasingly autocratic—a trend that some Jews were not entirely willing to accept. Much of the discontent stemmed from the Pharisees (see 110–113; Book II, 119, 162). Until this time they had been the party supporting the rulers, but they took exception to John's Hellenistic ways and particularly to his assumption of permanent high priesthood. In their view, this office belonged to the traditional biblical line of priests of the house of Zaddok, Solomon's high priest. They wanted John to exercise civil authority only, and even that on an interim basis, "until a priest descended from Zaddok, and a King from the House of David could be installed." This sectarian dispute is alluded to in *Antiquities* XIII, 288–289, when an outspoken Pharisee said to John at a banquet, "If you desire to pursue the path of righteousness, you shall give up the high priesthood and content yourself with governing the people." The incident is repeated in the story of a successor, Alexander Jannaeus (see 88[*b*]). Eventually, because of their insistence on this, Hyrcanus turned against the Pharisees and went over to the Sadducees (referred to further on); in time an open break developed between the Hasmonean ruler and the Pharisees. Hyrcanus abolished several religious and civil regulations and ruthlessly quelled the uprising provoked by his action. It appears that before his death, in 104 BC, he was obliged to reach some understanding with the Pharisees, since his will provided that the high priesthood and the civil authority be separated. His wife was bequeathed control of secular affairs, while the high priesthood was bestowed on his son, Judas Aristobulus.

70[*a*] The founding of the Hasmonean monarchy was just one more Hellenistic practice followed by Hyrcanus. The Latin historian Strabo discounted Hyrcanus' coronation. In any case he seized complete power, like a king. The coronation date given by Josephus in par. 70 was corrected in *Antiquities* XIII, to 481 years after the liberation decree, while it actually took place 432 years after the decree of Cyrus, the Persian king who liberated the Jews from Babylonian exile. Aristobulus' military achievements, expanding Hasmonean rule over northern Palestine, were accomplished mostly during his father's time, as he himself reigned for only one year. But in 104–103 BC he managed to conquer the valley of Jezreel and the mountains of Galilee west of the Jordan.

72[*a*] See the end of Aristobulus, 82[*a*].

73[*b*] Sukkoth (in Hebrew), an autumn feast lasting eight days, an important national holiday attended by large numbers of pilgrims from the countryside and the Diaspora.

75[*a*] and 77[*a*] *Straton's tower of Jerusalem and the underground passage* The Baris fortress was built during the Persian period (before Nehemia's time, fourth century BC) at the northwestern angle of the Temple Mount area. John Hyrcanus strengthened it, and his son Judas Aristobulus ruled from there. An underground passage was cut between the tower of that fortress—called Straton's Tower—and the Temple. The passage enabled the high priest and the king to enter the inner courts of the Temple from the palace without passing through the crowds. The name of that tower is identical, for some unknown reason, with that of the Hellenistic city that later became Caesarea (see 80[*d*]). Finally, the Baris fortress was rebuilt later by King Herod and called the Antonia in honor of Mark Antony.

78[*b*] The characteristics of the Essene sectaries are described below in Book II, 119–165 and Book III, 11: however, powers of divination are not ascribed to them and Josephus' reference to the Essenes does not seem to conform to the pattern.

79[*c*] Six hundred furlongs are one hundred thirteen kilometers (seventy miles); the fourth hour of the day is approximately ten o'clock a.m.

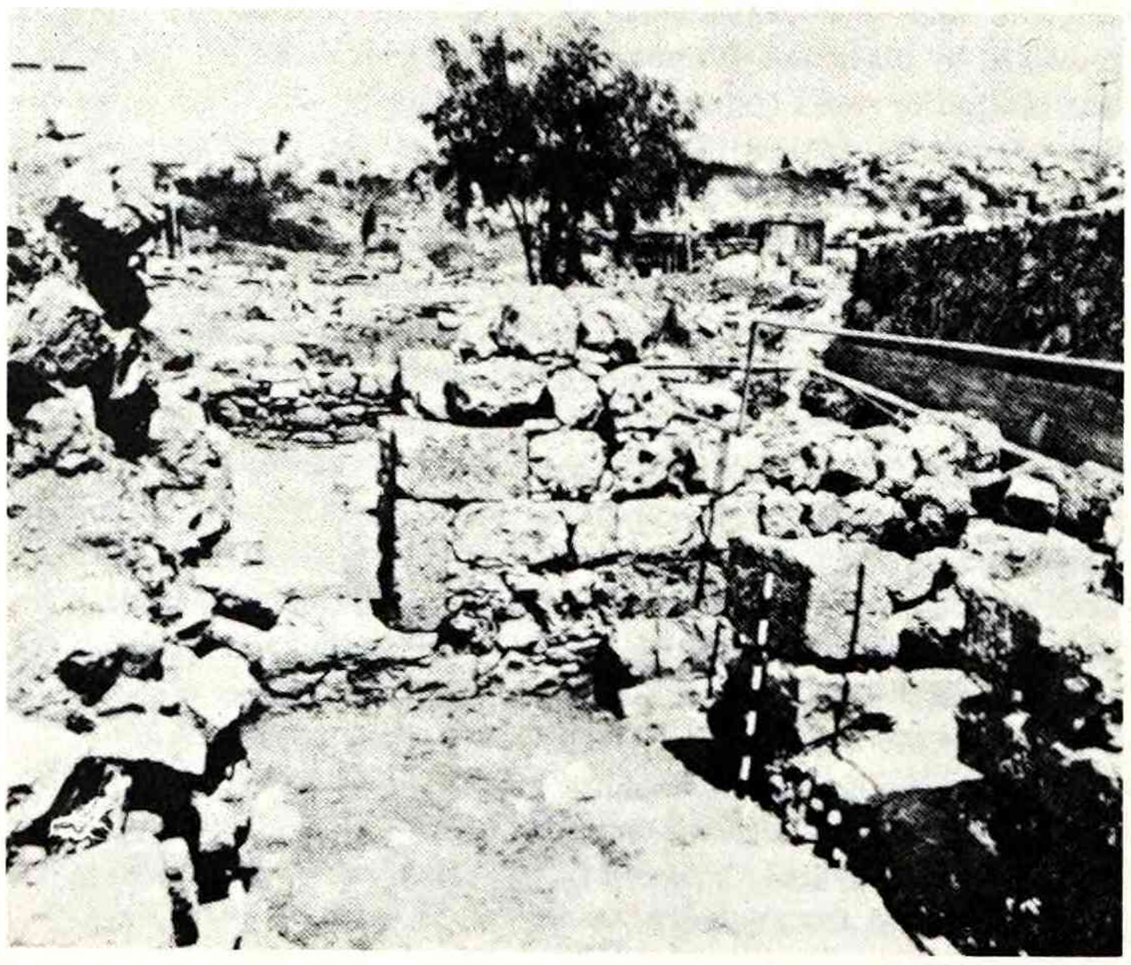
80[*d*] Straton's Tower near Caesarea had formerly been a Phoenician harbor city identified by its ancient name *Ebed-Ashtarth* (servant of Astarte), and was known for its Hellenistic coastal fort and harbor held by the Hasmoneans near the site. It was later rebuilt by Herod and renamed Caesarea (see 408[*a*]). The identical name in connection with the Jerusalem story is not mentioned elsewhere in ancient writings except in Josephus' corresponding account in *Antiquities* XIII.

82[*a*] It is difficult to distinguish fact from fiction in this gripping tale. J. Klausner believed that "all these accounts... suggest highly imaginative fiction... Aristobulus' Jewish political enemies apparently attributed all sorts of fabricated cruelties to him... As for the Greek historians, they hated the Hasmonean rulers for having destroyed the Greek cities in Palestine... Yet the historian Timagenes stated that 'he was a truly kind person'." In fact, Josephus does not attempt to reconcile the contradictions in his source. The same remark may be applied to Jannaeus with certain reservations in connection with the large number of Jews he killed (see 91).

85[*a*] Alexander Jannaeus was the Grecized form of Jannai. Alexandra's Hebrew name was Shlomzion. Jannaeus followed the custom of levirate marriage by taking his brother's widow, Alexandra, as his wife. To the despair of the Pharisees, who opposed him, he was declared king and high priest.

86[*a*] *Asochis* or Sichin in Galilee was captured by Ptolemy in 103 BC, and Alexander Jannaeus was unsuccessful in his early campaigns until Ptolemy finally returned to Cyprus. Between 102–95 BC the aggressive king undertook a series of campaigns against the independent Hellenist cities that refused to acknowledge the expanding Hasmonean

Remains of a Hasmonean fort on the march route of compaigns shown on page 19



3. (75) Gradually and reluctantly Aristobulus began to believe these tales, but he attempted to hide his suspicions. As a precaution against unforeseen dangers, he posted bodyguards in a dark subterranean passage of the fortress (formerly called Baris [*a*] and later Antonia) where he lay at the time. He sent men to instruct his brother to come to him unarmed; then ordered his men not to harm Antigonus if he arrived unarmed, but to kill him if he came armed. (76) Thereupon the queen contrived a cunning plot with the conspirators. They incited the guards not to deliver the king's message, but to tell Antigonus instead that his brother heard of the fine armor and military decorations he had obtained in Galilee, which due to his illness he could not come and inspect himself. "However," the message went on, "now that you are about to depart, I should like very much to see you in your new outfit."

4. (77) On hearing this, and aware of nothing in his brother's disposition to arouse his suspicion, Antigonus set off in his armor as for a parade. On reaching the dark passage, called Straton's Tower [*a*], he was slain by the guards, affording convincing evidence that no natural affection is proof against slander, and none of our better feelings are strong enough to hold out indefinitely against envy.

5. (78) There was another astonishing aspect to the incident. Judas, a member of the Essene [*b*] sect, had never erred or been proven wrong in his predictions. When he saw Antigonus passing through the Temple courts he called out to his acquaintances (many pupils were sitting beside him). (79) "Oh me! I would rather be dead, since truth had died before me and one of my predictions had just come true. Here is Antigonus alive, although he is supposed to be killed today. However, the place of his murder was to be Straton's Tower, which is six hundred furlongs [*c*] from here; and it is already the fourth hour of the day. So time has frustrated my prediction." (80) He then plunged into gloomy meditation. Shortly after, the news of Antigonus' murder in the underground passage called Straton's Tower (like the one in Caesarea [*d*] by the sea) became known. The similarity of the names had confused the seer.

6. Aristobulus' gruesome end

(81) Remorse for his foul crime immediately aggravated Aristobulus' illness. Constantly preoccupied with thoughts of the murder, and tormented by violent grief, he wasted away until his insides ruptured and he threw up a flood of blood. (82) When one of the servants who attended him took it away, he slipped at the very spot where Antigonus had been murdered, and as willed by Divine Providence, spilt the blood of the murderer on the still visible stains of the murder. The bystanders began to shriek, believing that the servant had purposely poured the bloody libation on that spot

[*a*]. (83) The king demanded to know the reason for the outcry, and when no one dared to speak up, he insisted on being informed. At last, under pressure of threats, they told him the truth. With tears in his eyes, and groaning weakly, he said (84), "Indeed, I could not hide my lawless deeds from God's allseeing eye; swift retribution pursues me for the blood of my kinsman. How long, most shameless body, will you retain the soul that is sentenced to a brother's and mothers' vengeance? How long shall I pour out these libations of my blood, drop by drop? Let it be taken all at once. Let heaven cease to mock these dribbling libations from my entrails!" He expired immediately after that, having reigned no more than a year.

Chapter IV

1. The reign of Alexander Jannaeus

(85) Aristobulus' widow released his brothers and enthroned Alexander [*a*], who was entitled to the elevation both because of seniority and his seemingly more balanced character. However, when he came to power, he put to death one brother who had aspirations to the throne, but he honored the survivor who preferred a quiet life remote from public affairs.

2. Early wars

(86) Alexander also came into conflict with Ptolemy Lathyrus who had seized the town of Asochis [*a*], and although he inflicted many casualties, victory went to Ptolemy. But when Ptolemy, pursued by his mother Cleopatra, retired to Egypt [*b*], Alexander besieged and captured Gadara and Amathus [*c*], the biggest stronghold east of Jordan, where the most valuable possessions of Theodorus [*d*], son of Zeno, were held. (87) However, Theodorus counter-attacked; he recovered both his treasures and the king's baggage train and killed some ten thousand Jews. Alexander, however, recovered from the blow and turned in the direction of the coast, capturing Gaza, Raphia and Anthedon which King Herod later renamed Aggripias [*e*].

3. (88) After Alexander captured and enslaved these towns [*a*], the Jews rose up against him on one of the festive occasions when seditions are most likely to flare up [*b*]. It looked as though he would not be able

rule, and that still flourished in northern and eastern Transjordan and on the southern coast of Judaea. Alexander's military career, a lifetime devoted to reconquering biblical Palestine, is described more amply in *Antiquities* XIII, 12–15. It is characteristic of him that he raised an army of fifty thousand native Jewish troops during his campaigns against Ptolemy, using few foreign mercenaries.

86[*b*] According to *Antiquities* XIII 238, 358, he eventually returned to Cyprus over which he reigned.

86[*c*] *Gadara*, city of the Hellenist Decapolis close to, and southeast of, the Lake of Galilee, modern Umm-Qeis (see map of Alexander Jannaeus' Kingdom). *Amathus:* An important center in northern Transjordan which did not wish to be under a Jewish state.

86[*d*] Theodorus was ruler of northern Transjordan, with prosperous Gerasa (present Jerash) as his capital.

87[*e*] *Agrippias* or Agrippeion, formerly Anthedon near Gaza (see 416[*e*]). By then Alexander had also added Idumaea and the entire prosperous coastal region to his kingdom; and in the process he killed those who refused to proselytize. Judaea was again coming into its own as a commercial and maritime power in the eastern Mediterranean. Consequently, after the conquest of the daughter cities Anthedon and Raphia, Alexander's domains extended as far as Rhinocorura (el-Arish), or the "brook of Egypt", the biblical boundary of the Land of Israel: Only Ascalon was apparently deliberately left an independent enclave within the Hasmonean dominions. In any case, Alexander greatly enlarged his kingdom west and east of the Jordan (see map). The Hasmoneans seemed to have organized their territories into provinces subdivided into toparchies; at least twenty-four of the latter, inhabited by Jews, formed the foundation of the organization of the *Ma'amadoth,* the territories from which delegations went up in regular rotation to serve in the Temple of Jerusalem throughout the year (Mishna Taanith 4, 2).

88[*a*] *Alexander's blow to Nabataean expansion (100 BC)* When Alexander captured the southern coast of Palestine from Gaza and Raphia to El-Arish in Sinai, it dealt a serious blow to the economic interests of the Nabataeans, south of Judaea (*War* I, 86). He then captured the coast of the Dead Sea and the capital of Moab, east of the Jordan, thus taking over the Nabataean trade in asphalt that floated in thick flakes on the Dead Sea surface. This substance was prized in Egypt for the embalming of mummies. (The Dea Sea was therefore called Lake Asphaltitis by the ancients.) After ejecting the indigenous hostile gentiles from these coastal towns, he replaced them with a more loyal population (*Antiq.* XIII, 395–397). Excavations and surveys in the Negev show a decline in Nabataean cities and commercial outposts in the area, as well as a decline in Nabataean dominance south of Judaea because of Hasmonean expansion, according to M. Gihon. But the Nabataeans refused to yield to Hasmonean pressure to associate them in their prosperous international caravan trade and maritime outlets. Evidence of Jannaeus' developing maritime trade is provided by a ship's anchor on coins issued by him, and by the graffito drawing of a warship on the tomb of a contemporary, Jason, uncovered in the heart of modern Jerusalem. The Nabataeans eventually opened and reinforced new caravan routes through Moab and Damascus, and by a supreme effort, managed to survive the disaster and maintain their power. The Nabataean setbacks, and their refusal to cooperate with Alexander Jannaeus, delayed for a time the development of the southern area captured from them in Hasmonean times; this awaited developments in Herod's day (see map). The Nabataeans remained hostile to the Jews for the next century (see 365[*c*]).

88[*b*] *Jannaeus breaks with the Pharisees* After Jannaeus abolished the Sanhedrin or *Hever Hayehudim* (Jewish Assembly), differences between the Pharisaic and Sadducean factions grew more acute and tension reached a critical point. The spark was touched off on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles when Jannaeus appeared at the Temple. The Pharisee dissidents pelted him with their *ethrogim* (ceremonial citrons), shouting that he was unworthy of the high priesthood. *Tractate Kiddushin* 66 in the Talmud tells the same story, but ascribes it to Rabbi Eleazar (see 69[*b*]), in which Judah ben Yadidyah said to the king, "Thou hast enough with the royal crown. Leave the crown of priesthood to the seed of Aaron" (the Zaddokite priestly line). Except that Hyrcanus' name is replaced here by Alexander. As already noted, the Hasmonean state was a theocracy, and the royal title served as an ornament to impress foreigners and the unsophisticated masses. The Pharisees knew that if the Hasmonean rulers gave up the high priesthood they would forfeit their key theocratic position of authority over the people, namely the Temple, with its vast treasures and great psychological power, over popular faith and imagination. Thus, some fifty-sixty years after Judas the Maccabee, the alliance between the people and the ruling Hasmoneans broke down, and the Pharisees turned against them. In addition to the religious arguments advanced by the Pharisees—who represented the people at large—they also opposed the high taxation caused by many wars, the rise of a new wealthy class, and the impoverishment of the masses (see 105[*g*]). Josephus stresses that such revolts broke out chiefly during festivals, when the masses gathered in Jerusalem. Jannaeus was not one to accept the insult flaunted at the Temple. He sent his foreign mercenaries against the people. These

mercenaries were recruited from the provinces in Asia Minor governed by the Seleucids.

89[*c*] According to Josephus, six thousand people were killed that day (an exaggerated estimate). Though he quelled the revolt, the ferment came to a peak with greater intensity when Jannaeus suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Nabateans (see 90[*a*]).

The evidence of the coins "A typical example of power struggles and historical processes finds expression in the group of overstruck coins of Alexander Jannaeus, in which the ruler's title was changed from Yehonathan the King to Jonathan the high priest and the *hever* (assembly) of the Jews. This change followed the opposition of the Pharisees to the crown assumed by Jannaeus, and is indicative of the rise of this faction towards the end of his reign." (*Inscriptions Reveal,* p. 97).

89[*d*] He attacked the Nabateans who controlled Transjordan (and northern Sinai), including the biblical lands of Gilead and Moab (see 365 ff.).

90[*a*] Obdat, king of the Nabateans (called Arabs in the text), whose realm extended over the Negeb, Sinai and Transjordan. Their major mode of transportation was by camel, and they controlled the desert trade routes throughout the Middle East. A description of Nabatean Petra is given in 125[*c*], and of the Nabateans in 365[*c*] (see illustrations).

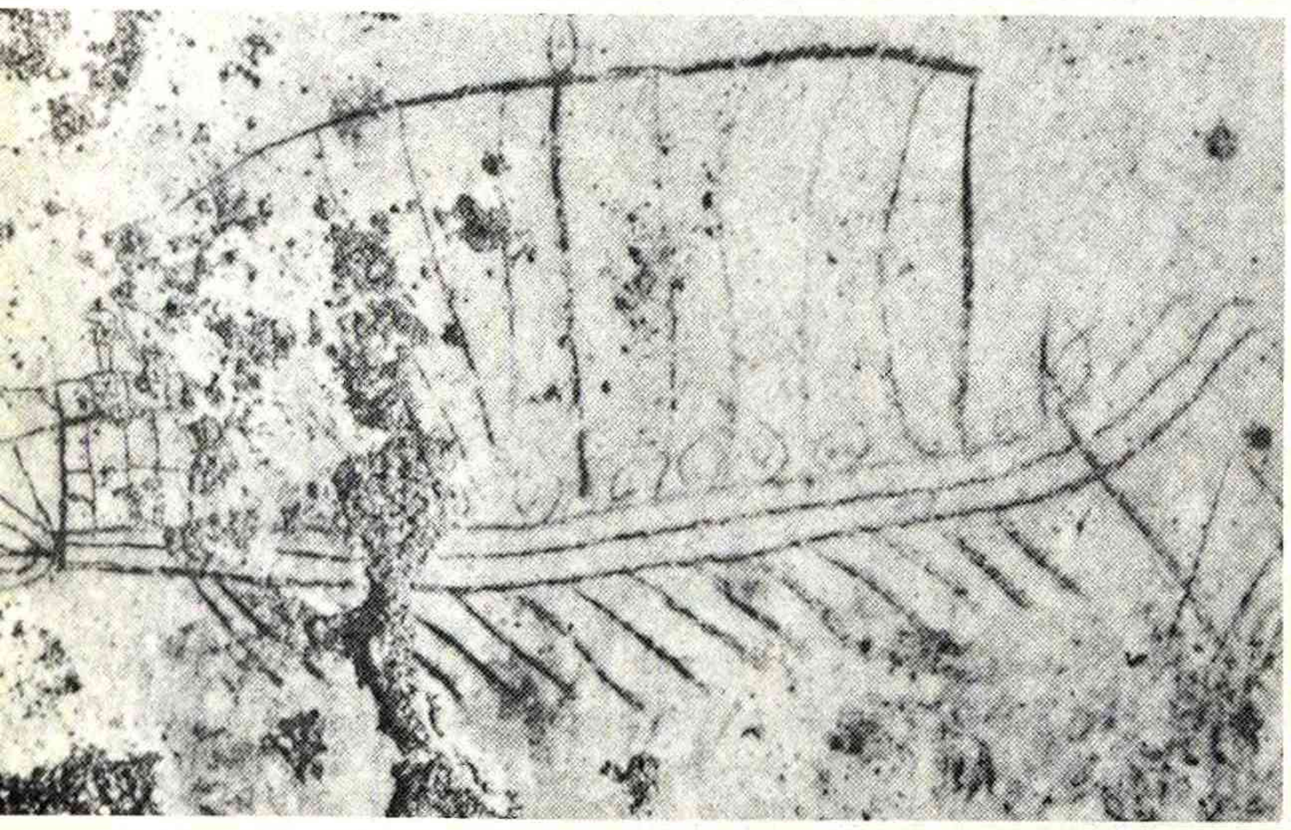
90[*b*] An open break came in 93 BC when the Pharisees (see 69[*b*], 88[*b*]) the party of the people, precipitated a civil war that lasted six years. The political aspirations of this bellicose Hasmonean and the lack of austerity at his court had further alienated the traditionalist Pharisees.

92[*c*] The nickname Akairios, as given here, is either "propitious" or "nonpropitious", stemming either from the praise of his supporters or the mockery of his opponents: his enemies called him "Akairios the nonpropitious," and he was one of the last Seleucid kings to engage in internecine wars before the Roman occupation of Syria.

92[*d*] In central Palestine (today's Nablus). See map.

93[*a*] The figures in *Antiquities XIII,* 327 were three thousand horse- and forty thousand foot-soldiers for Demetrius against six thousand two hundred mercenaries and some twenty thousand Jews for Alexander. Before joining battle the two monarchs issued proclamations intended to attract deserters from the opposite side; Demetrius hoped to win over Alexander's mercenaries, and Alexander, the Jewish allies of Demetrius.

A graffito in the tomb of Jason the mariner depicting a ship in a naval battle; this is indicative of the close connection between Jerusalem and the sea



to quell the rebellion had not his mercenaries, recruited from Pisidia and Cilicia come to his aid. He would not accept Syrians as mercenaries because of their innate hatred of the Jews. (89) Having slain over six thousand insurgents [*c*], he turned to Arabia [*d*], overran Gilead and Moab, and imposed tribute on the inhabitants. Then, returning once more to Amathus, he found that Theodoros, intimidated by his victories, had abandoned the fortress which he in turn razed to the ground.

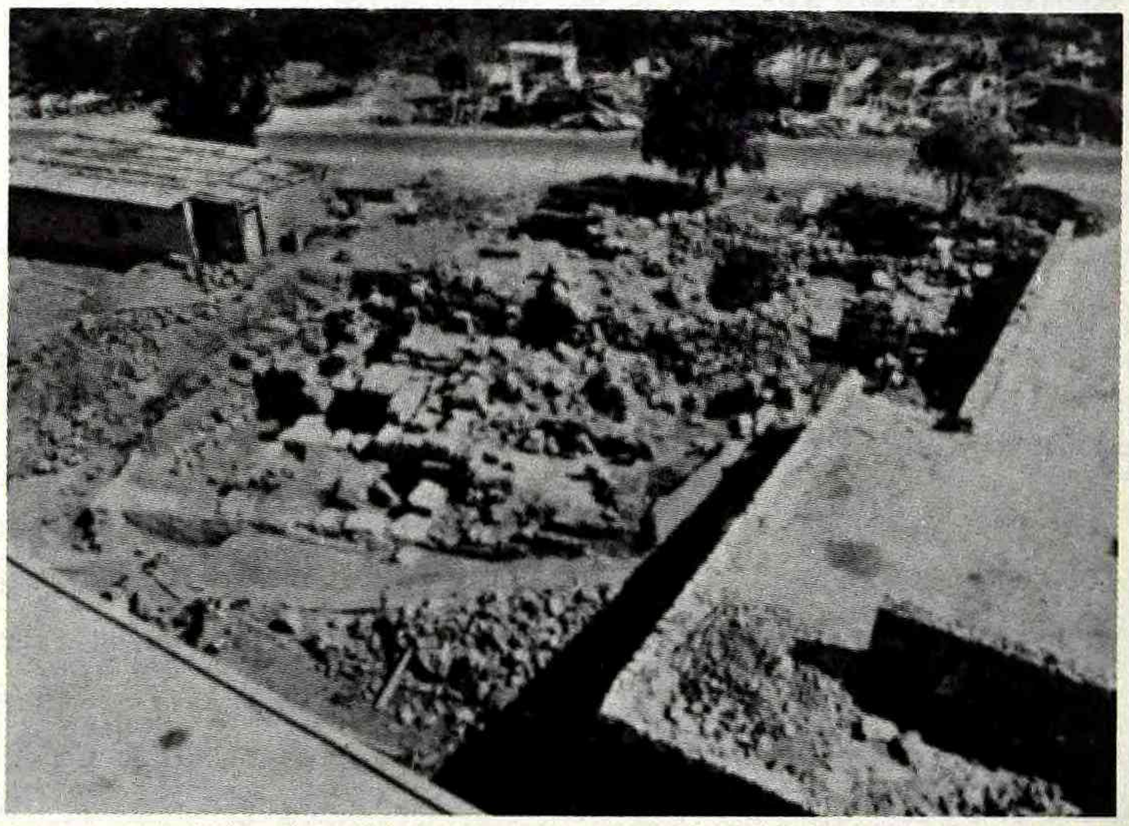
4. Conflicts with the Arabs and the civil war

(90) He next took the field against Obdat, king of Arabia [*a*], who entrapped him in an ambush near the Gaulan. He lost his whole army—cooped up in a deep canyon, his men were crushed under masses of camels. He succeeded in escaping to Jerusalem, but the extent of his defeat provoked the nation, which hated him, into rebellion [*b*]. (91) In a succession of engagements over a period of six years he killed no fewer than fifty thousand Jews and had the upper hand once again. However, he had little reason to rejoice in these victories that threatened to destroy his kingdom. Therefore, he stopped the fighting and attempted to win over his subjects by persuasion. (92) But they hated and distrusted him all the more for his change of policy and inconsistency of character. When he asked them how he could satisfy them, their retort was, "Die; for even your death would hardly reconcile us to one guilty of such atrocities." They then turned for aid to Demetrius III Akairios [*c*], who was ready to help in the hope of enlarging his realm. He arrived with an army, and the Jewish insurgents joined their allies near Shechem [*d*].

5. The war with Demetrius

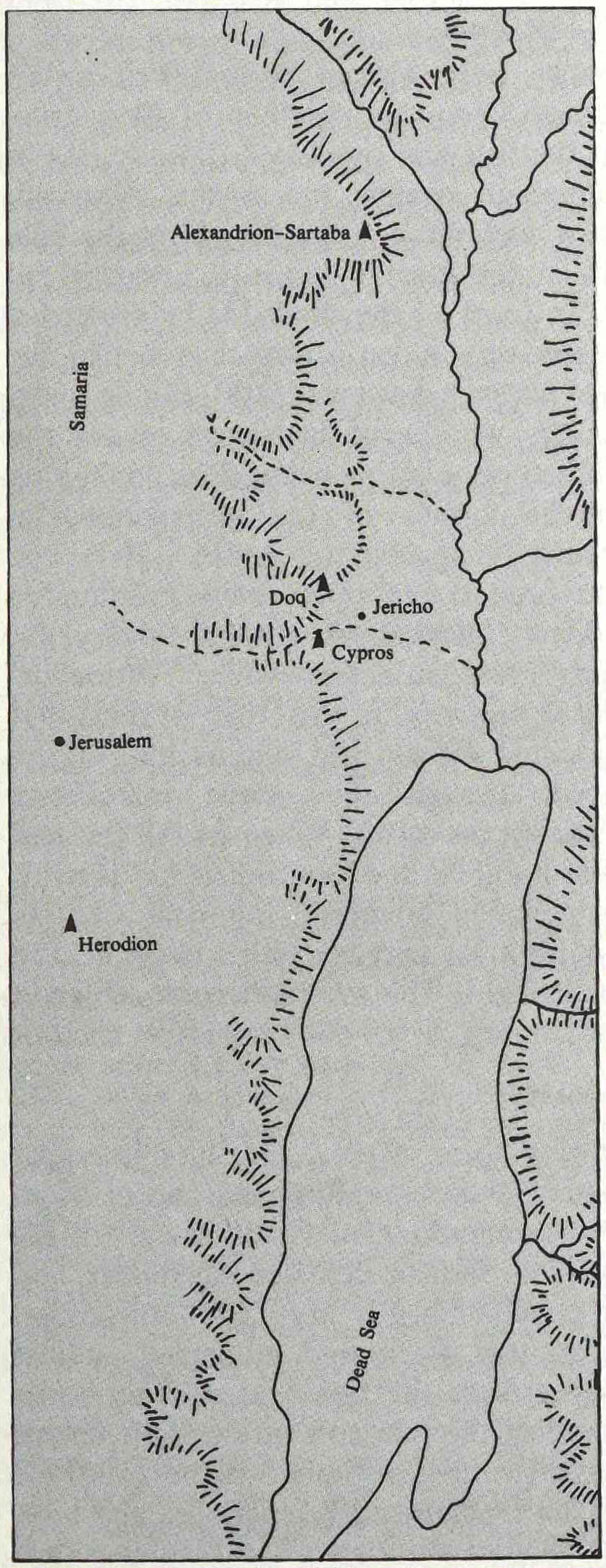
(93) The combined army of three thousand horsemen and fourteen thousand foot soldiers was opposed by Alexander with one thousand horsemen and eight thousand foot soldiers consisting of mercenaries, besides some ten thousand Jews still loyal to the king

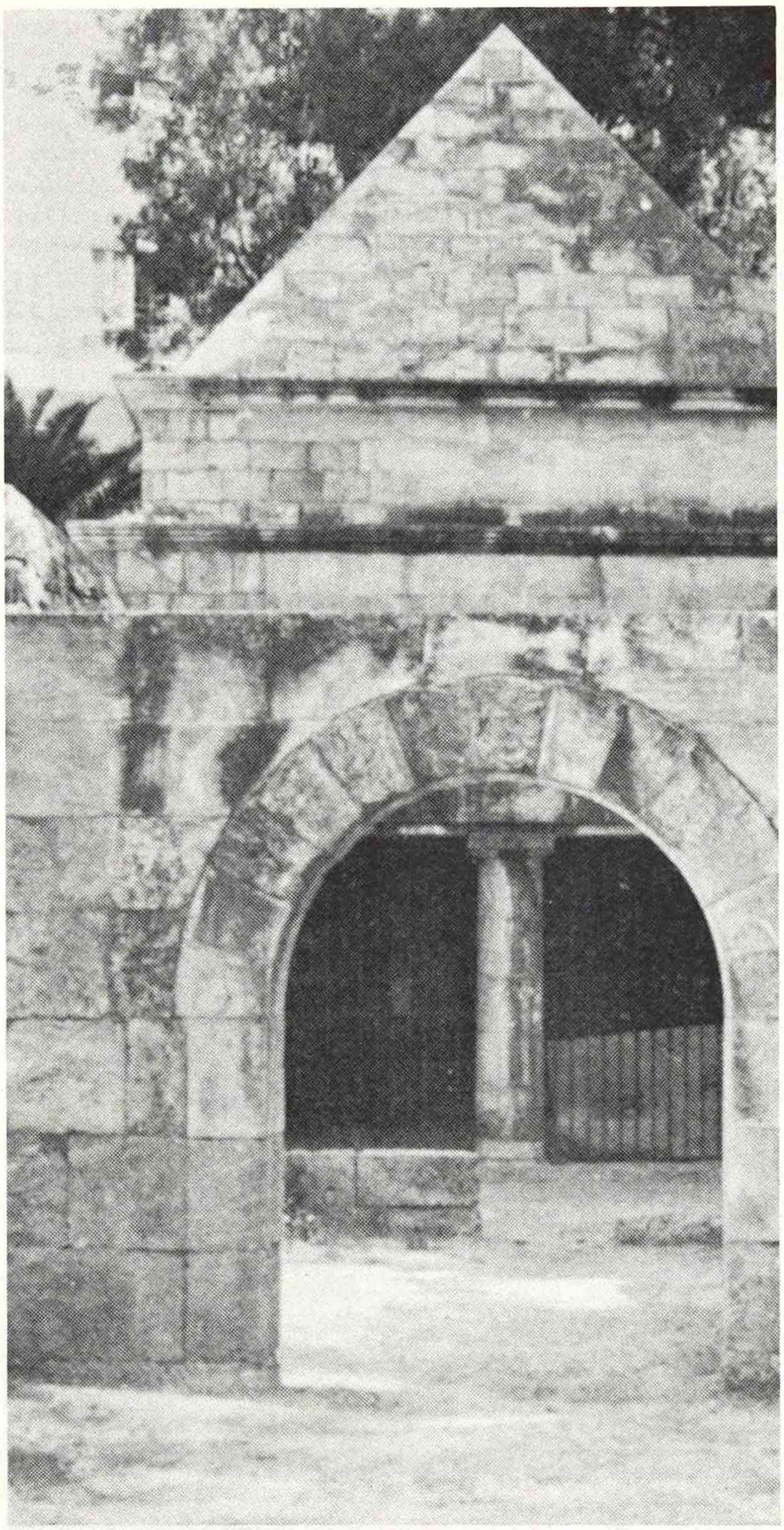
General view of the Hasmonean fort at Giv'at-Shaul in western Jerusalem



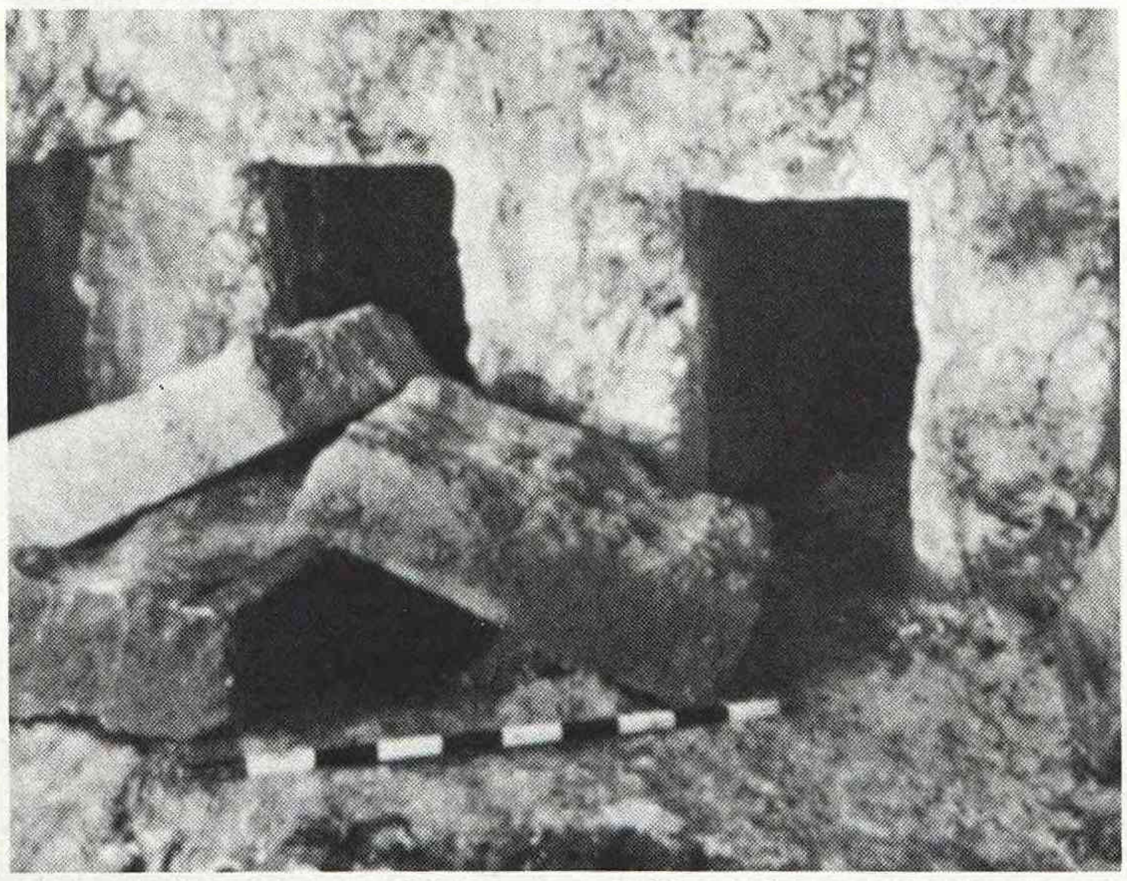
[*a*]. Before attacking, both kings issued proclamations intended to attract deserters from the opposite camp. Demetrius hoped to win over Alexander's mercenaries, and Alexander hoped to win over Demetrius' Jewish supporters. (94) But as the Jews would not forgo their resentment, and the Hellenes their loyalty, they left the issue to the clash of arms. (95) Demetrius won the battle despite the determination and prowess displayed by Alexander's mercenaries. The outcome, however, was not what the kings expected. Demetrius, the victor, was deserted by the Jews who had summoned him, and Alexander, while fleeing to the hills, was joined by six thousand Jews out of sympathy for his reverse of fortune. This turn of affairs was too much for Demetrius; believing Alexander to be in a position to defeat him, and thinking that the whole nation had transferred its allegiance to Alexander, he withdrew.

Hasmonean fortresses in the Jordan valley





Reconstructed tomb of "Jason the mariner" of the later Hasmonean period, showing the entrance, the cave within, and ship



96[*a*] Called Beth Omri in *Antiquities XIII*, 380. It appears to have been a mountain haven of refuge in the heart of Judaea.

97[*b*] This is a striking item of contemporary behavior at court, seemingly in imitation of the mores of the Hellenistic kings, whose manner and pomp had become a way of life for the Hasmonean princes.

98[*c*] It is believed by some that the Essenes first retired to Qumran as a result of the civil war and persecutions in the days of Alexander Jannaeus; but it must be noted that the oldest coins found at the site date to the days of John Hyrcanus. Two varieties of Jannaeus coins are extant (see 88[*b*]). It is also generally agreed that the Essenes mentioned by Josephus may be identified with the well-known Essene sectaries in Qumran.

99[*a*] Presumably Antiochus XIII Dionysus, circa 86–85 BC. However, the last of the Seleucid line, before Syria became a Roman province in 64 BC, was Antiochus XIII Asiaticus.

99[*b*] This trench, several miles long, was dug from the seashore near modern Tel-Aviv in an easterly direction, through the sand dunes and foothills, to a site east of modern Petah Tikva, and was intended to bar Antiochus' advance and bog down his wagon trains. Wooden towers were erected at different points along the south side of the trench. Their flagstones have been identified in Tel-Aviv.

102[*c*] Cana, south of the Dead Sea, in Nabatean territory and on their caravan route.

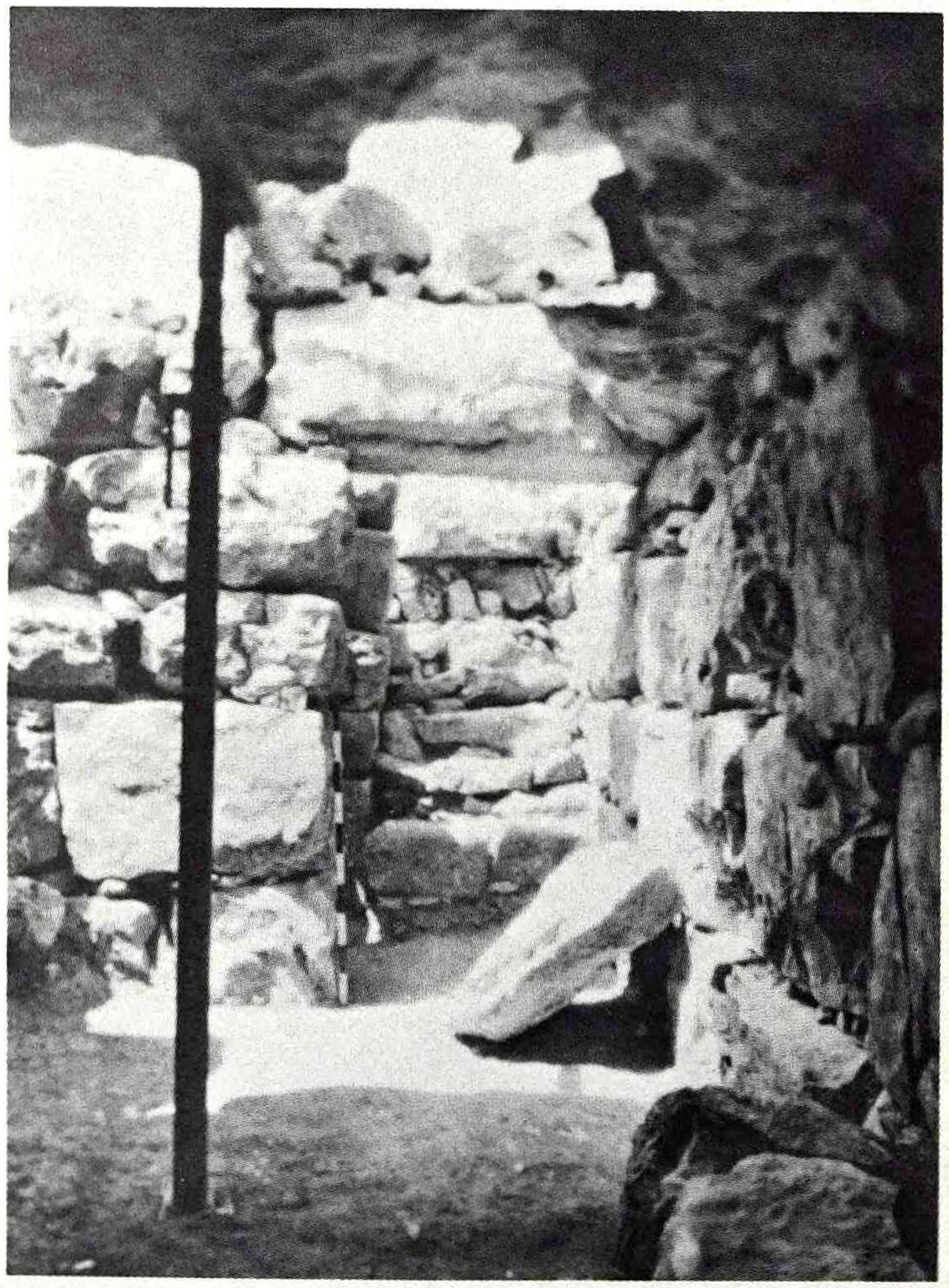
103[*a*] Ptolemy was king of Chalcis in the Lebanon and the neighboring territory of Coele-Syria (north of Galilee; see also 115[*a*]). Aretas was king of the Nabateans in northern Transjordan, up to the border of Coele-Syria. The Nabateans had extended their dominions as far as Damascus, and the Hasmoneans could not dislodge them from there (see 115).

104[*b*] See 86[*d*].

105[*c*] Seleucia in the Gaulan.

105[*d*] The Huleh lake in northern Palestine (see map).

Ground floor of the Hasmonean fort and stairs leading to the tower



6. Alexander's massacre and crucifixion of the Jews. (96) With the departure of their ally, the rest of the people did not drop their opposition; they waged continuous war with Alexander until, after having killed large numbers of them, he drove the rest into Bemeselis [*a*]. After taking the town, he brought the survivors as prisoners to Jerusalem. (97) Furious beyond measure, his brutality led him to commit sacrilege. He had eight hundred of the captives crucified in the heart of the city and butchered their wives and children before their eyes, while he enjoyed the spectacle, drinking and reclining with his concubines beside him [*b*]. (98) Such a fear took hold of the people, that the next night eight thousand of the opposing faction fled beyond the pale of Judaea [*c*]. Their exile ended only with Alexander's death. In his last years, after having belatedly and with difficulty secured peace for the country, he rested from warfare.

7. Alexander's last wars

(99) Fresh troubles were in store for him. Prince Antiochus, surnamed Dionysus, brother of Demetrius and the last of the Seleucid dynasty [*a*], had already launched a campaign against the Arabs. Alarmed, Alexander dug a deep ditch, extending from the hills above Antipatris to the coast of Joppa, to intercept the prince's army. In front of the ditch [*b*] he erected a high wall with spaced wooden towers, in order to bar the routes where passage was easy. (100) But he failed to block Antiochus, who burnt the towers, leveled the ditch, and marched on with his army. Postponing his vengeance on the author of the obstruction, he marched immediately against the Arabs. (101) The Arab king first retired to a more favorable position for battle, then suddenly faced about with his cavalry, ten thousand strong, and attacked while Antiochus' troops were still in disarray. In the bitter struggle that followed, Antiochus' forces held out as long as he himself survived, though they were mercilessly decimated by the Arabs. (102) When he fell (he had constantly risked his life in the forefront of his army to encourage his defeated soldiers), the rout became general. Most of his army perished either in the field or in the subsequent flight. The survivors took refuge in the village of Cana [*c*], where all save a few died of starvation.

8. (103) Following these events, the inhabitants of Damascus—out of hatred for Ptolemy, son of Mennaeas—crowned Aretas king of Coele-Syria [*a*]. He led an expedition into Judaea, defeated Alexander, and withdrew after concluding a treaty. (104) Alexander, on his part, captured Pella and advanced against Gerasa, hoping to seize the treasures of Theodorus [*b*]. After blockading the garrison with a triple line of walls, he captured the town without a battle. (105) He also conquered the Gaulan and Seleucia [*c*], and took the so-called "Valley of Antiochus" [*d*]. He also cap-

tured the stronghold of Gamla [*e*], and dismissed its commander, Demetrius, who had been accused of many wrongdoings. After campaigning for three whole years [*f*], Alexander returned to Judaea and was warmly welcomed by the nation for his successes [*g*]. But the end of the war coincided with the onset of disease. (106) Afflicted with malaria, he hoped to shake it off by returning to active life. He threw himself into ill-timed campaigns, and by making impossible demands on his strength, hastened his end. He died amidst the turbulence of war after a reign of twenty-seven years.

Chapter V

1. Queen Alexandra (Salome)

(107) Alexander left the kingdom to his wife, Alexandra [*a*], confident that the Jews would surely submit to her authority, since she had gained the goodwill of the people by her opposition to his crimes and by not being brutal. (108) He was not mistaken in his expectations; though she was a woman, she established her authority and reputation by her piety. She was most particular in her observance of the national traditions and would banish from power anyone who deviated from the sacred laws. (109) Of the sons she had borne Alexander, she appointed Hyrcanus, the elder, as high priest; besides, because of his lethargic disposition, he was not inclined to interfere in public affairs. The younger, who was hot-headed, she kept out of public office altogether.

105[*e*] *Gamla* lies in the Gaulan district.

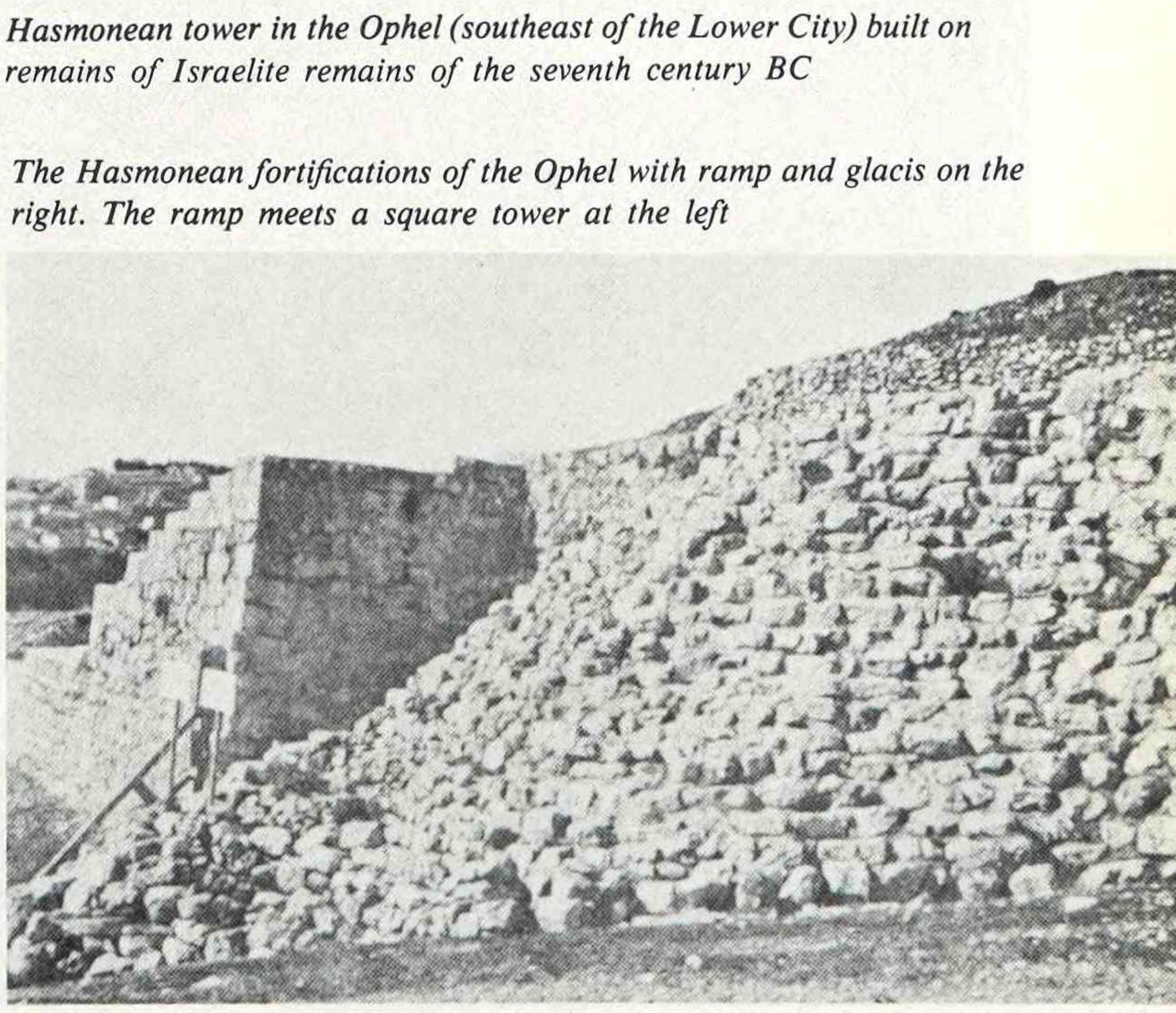
105[*f*] *The Hasmonean domain* In summation, Alexander had organized a standing army of native-born, and between 83–76 BC resumed his wars of expansion and consolidation in Transjordan and the Gaulan, capturing the Hellenistic towns. By the end of his reign his territory was almost as large as the ancient kingdom of David (see map of Alexander's kingdom) and Judaea attained much prominence in commerce, industry, art and teaching. The gentiles in the Hellenistic towns abandoned their homes and were replaced by Jews, as proved by the excavations. The coastal towns now served as naval bases and centers of Jannaeus' merchant marine; he also engaged in naval warfare with other seafaring peoples (see illustration of Jewish boat). A state as strong and prosperous as his could have survived Jannaeus' death if the Romans had not appeared on the scene (see 131).

105[*g*] *What the Pharisees strove for* The Pharisees opposed Alexander's wars and conquests on "religious grounds." They dreaded the impact of heathen "impurity" (what we would define today as pollution) and were opposed to any development that might pollute the Holy Land, and Jerusalem in particular, with heathen ways. The Apocryphal "Psalms of Solomon," a Pharisaic source that dates in part from the time of Jannaeus, reflects the contemporary clash of opinions. A sharp distinction is drawn between the "sinners" (usually interpreted as certain Pharisees and Sadducees respectively), the latter being identified with the upper classes close to Alexander Jannaeus. A Pharisee opposition to the great quantity of arms and the waging of wars in general, emerges vividly from the messianic hope expressed in Psalm 17, 37–38:

> For he shall not put his faith in the horse, the rider and the bow,
> Nor shall he be affluent with gold and silver for war,
> And shall not rest his ambition on the warring masses;
> My Lord is his King,....

Hasmonean tower in the Ophel (southeast of the Lower City) built on remains of Israelite remains of the seventh century BC

The Hasmonean fortifications of the Ophel with ramp and glacis on the right. The ramp meets a square tower at the left



107[*a*] Alexandra's Hebrew name was Shlomit (Salome), and also Shlomzion (as mentioned in the Talmud; see 85[*a*]). She was a woman of determined character and enjoyed the staunch support of the Pharisees and the *Hever Hayehudim* (Congregation of the Jews) which directed public affairs.

110[*a*] Before his death, Alexander advised Alexandra to compromise with the Pharisees who reflected the mood of the people at large. She followed his advice, as stated, and the Pharisees soon displaced the Sadducees who represented the aristocracy and the priestly group, thus inevitably increasing party differences: "These religious statesmen finally proceeded to put their central idea into practice... their ideology was ridden with contempt for the values of the earthly kingdom, and a preference for the 'eternal' values, that is, religion. Provided they were allowed to do as they pleased, the Pharisees did not undermine the foundations of the Hasmonean Kingdom. But the moment they sensed that their aims were in jeopardy, they did not hesitate to sacrifice the national state so long as they would be in a position to strive for the Kingdom of the Messiah, This is how they acted during the quarrel of Jannaeus' two sons before Pompey" (A. Schalit, *The Hellenistic Age: World History of the Jewish People,* pp. 296–297) See reference to Jannaeus' sons in 131[*a*].

110[*b*] The "laws" being the *halakhot* or ordinances of the Oral Law, i.e., the accepted tradition of interpretation of the Torah or Written Law. Oral laws were current long before they were compiled into the Mishna at the end of the second century AD; until then they were handed down orally and were taught mostly by the Pharisee rabbis of the first century BC. In earlier times, daily religious and legal life was regulated by the Mosaic code (the Torah) that was entirely in the hands of the Scribes. Since Hasmonean days it reposited with the Pharisees who governed the wider sections of the population on the strength of it, and guided the Sanhedrin, the seventy-one member high court of justice and supreme council.

2. Ascendance of the Pharisees

(110) Alongside Queen Alexandra, and gaining power with her, were the Pharisees, [*a*], an important sector of the Jewish community who were considered more religious than the rest of the nation and stricter in the observance and interpretation of the Laws [*b*]. (111) The pious Alexandra was so totally subservient to them that they gradually took advantage of the ingenuous and pious woman and in time became the real administrators of public affairs, free to banish and recall, to release or imprison whoever they pleased. In brief, they enjoyed the authority while Alexandra bore the burdens of responsibility and expenses. (112) However, she proved to be a shrewd and capable administrator, and by regular recruiting doubled the size of the army, augmenting it with a considerable body of mercenaries. Besides strengthening her own country, she inspired in foreign monarchs a healthy respect. But while she ruled the nation, the Pharisees ruled her.

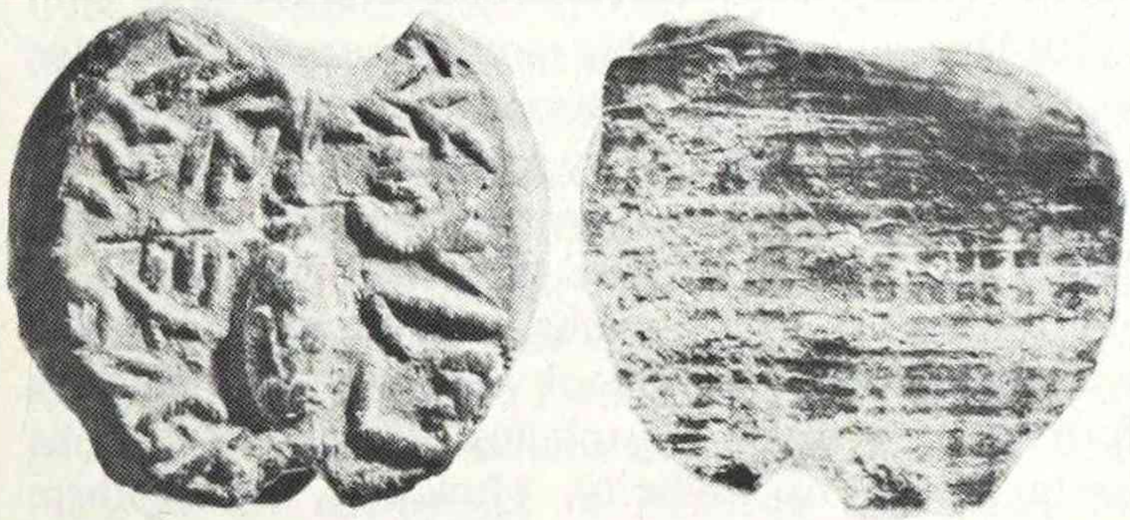
3. (113) Thus they executed Diogenes, a distinguished person who had been Alexander's close friend, on the charge of having advised the king to impale eight hundred victims. They also urged Alexandra to punish

Detail of the second-century BC Hasmonean wall over which Herod built his citadel in the following century

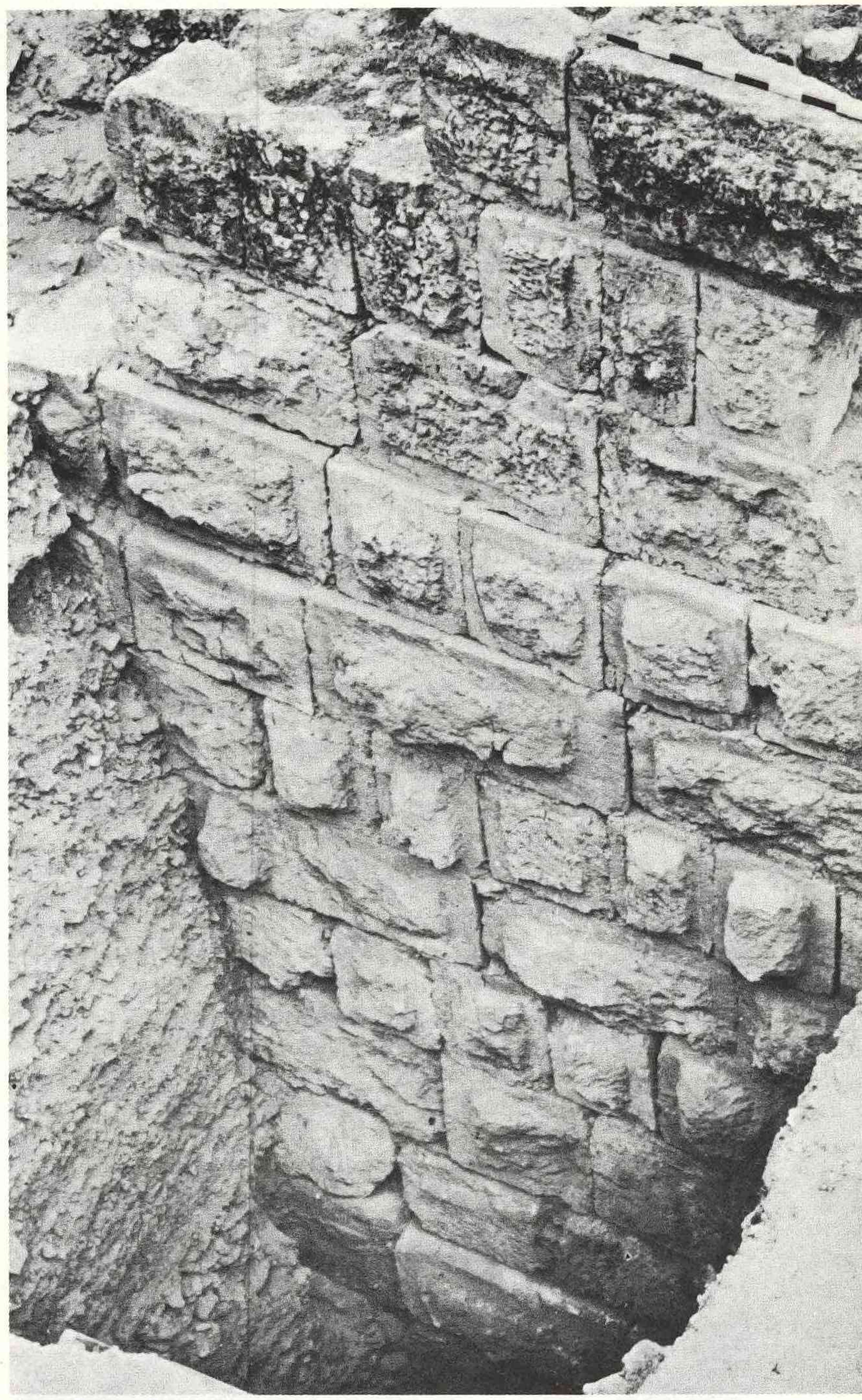
the others who had instigated Alexander against them. She was so devoted to the faith that she complied with the Pharisees, and they themselves executed whomever they wanted. (114) The most prominent of the threatened citizens sought the aid of Aristobulus, and he prevailed upon his mother to spare them in view of their status, and if she suspected them, to expel them from the city. When their security was guaranteed they dispersed throughout the country. (115) Alexandra sent a military expedition to Damascus on the pretext that Ptolemy was constantly putting pressure on that city; but the troops returned before they could achieve anything substantial [*a*]. (116) However, by means of bargaining and presents, she prevailed upon Tigranes, king of Armenia [*b*], who was encamped before Ptolemais, besieging Cleopatra

115[*a*] Ptolemy, son of Mennaeus, king of Chalcis in northern Lebanon. Alexandra sent her son Aristobulus to Damascus against him in a vain attempt to carry on the process of expansion initiated by Alexander Jannaeus; but it ended there.

116[*b*] *Tigranes* He represented a terrible threat; he overran all of Syria in 83 BC and ruled it until 70–69 BC, predicting the collapse of the Seleucid empire. Tigranes would have invaded Judaea as well had Alexandra not paid him a heavy tribute, as a vassal would pay his overlord. The Armenian king was forced back by the Romans who had already invaded the East (see 127[*e*]).

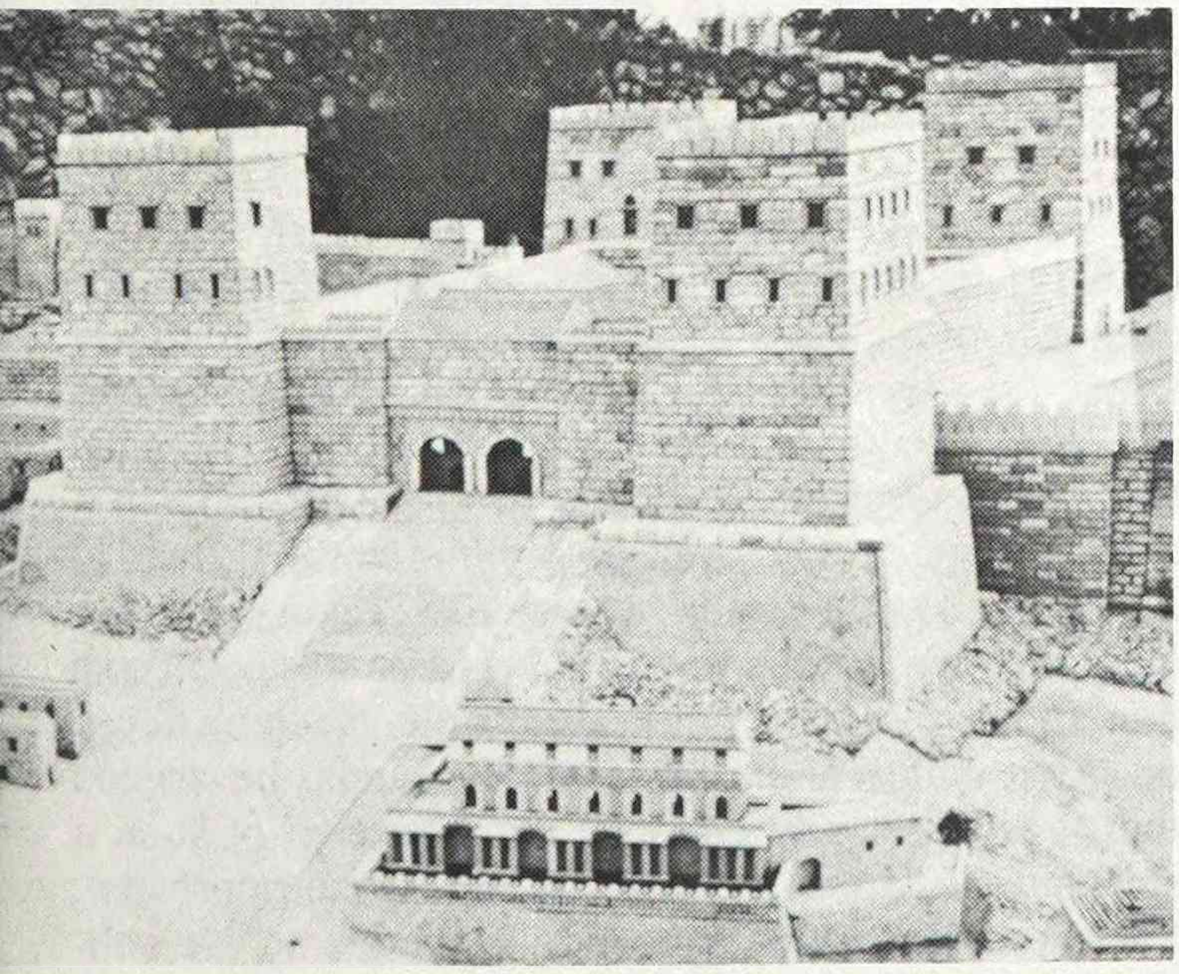


Seal of Jonathan the "high priest" (Alexander Jannaeus) depicting a palm-tree with Hebrew inscription on both sides



Joint of the Herodian Phasael tower and the earlier Hasmonean city wall in the courtyard of the Citadel, Jerusalem

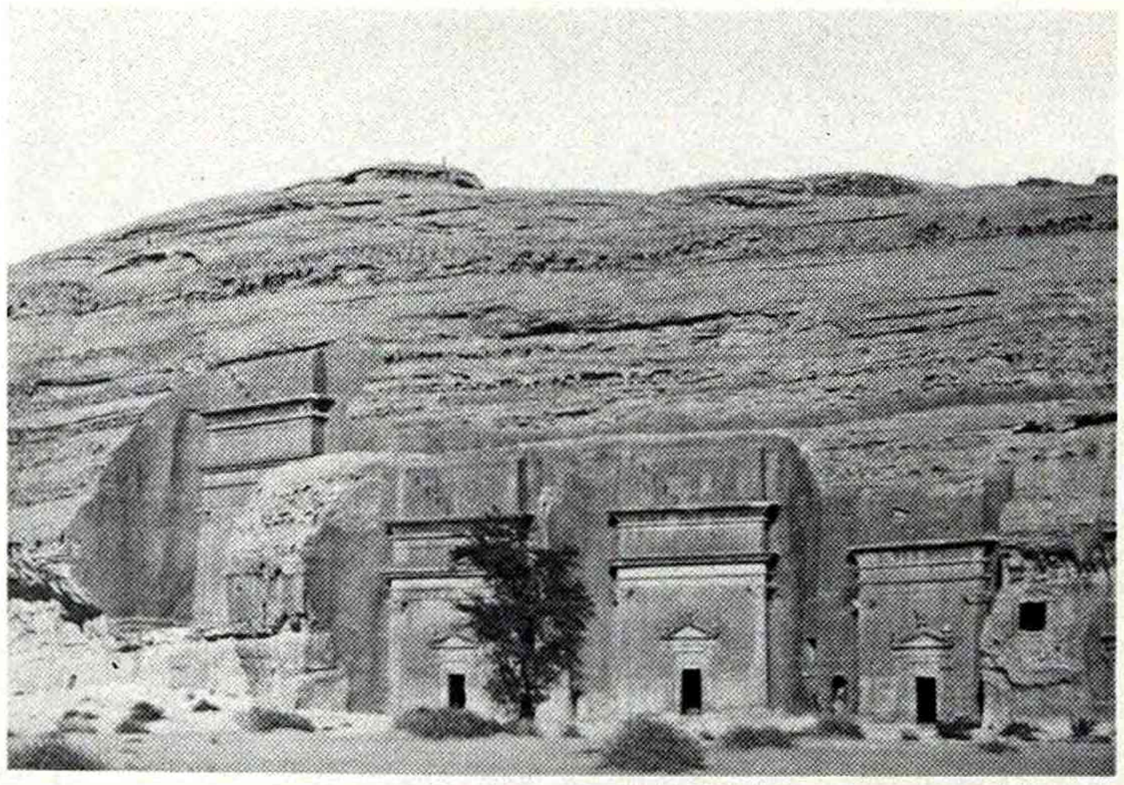
The Antonia citadel towering over the northwestern corner of the Temple Mount area



Bronze coins of Mattathias Antigonus

116[*c*] Daughter of Ptolemy V *(Antiq.* XIII, 420) who is known to have married several Seleucid kings of Syria.
118[*a*] Hyrcanus had been appointed high priest and heir before his mother's death, but Aristobulus, backed by the Pharisees, contested this decision.
118[*b*] See 75.
118[*c*] Samaria; see 64[*a*].
118[*d*] Formerly Anthedon, north of Gaza (see 87[*e*]).
122[*a*] *Hyrcanus' abdication in favor of Aristobulus (67–65 BC)* The palace of the Hasmoneans stood on the lower slope of the Upper City and overlooked the Temple Mount courts.
123[*a*] The Idumaeans had been proselytized by former Hasmonean princes and enjoyed considerable prestige in Judaea. Antipater's father had been appointed governor of Idumaea by Alexandra and had signed a pact of amity with the neighboring Nabataeans (called Arabs in the Josephus text). He was therefore invaluable to the Judaean court.
124[*b*] Aretas III to whom Antipater promised to restore twelve towns captured from him by Alexander Jannaeus (see 365 [*c*]).
125[*c*] *Petra,* situated in southern Jordan, is famous for its magnificent rock-hewn edifices, tombs and shrines (see illustrations). It was a converging point of the caravan routes and trade that were controlled and operated by the enterprising Nabataeans (see 365 [*c*]).
126[*d*] Where he fortified himself behind the huge walls and gates of the Temple Mount. These events took place in 65 BC.
127[*e*] King of Armenia who invaded Seleucid Syria, followed by the Romans who annexed it in 64 BC, putting an end to the Seleucid dynasty. Pompey entrusted Scaurus with the task of conquering the eastern littoral of the Mediterranean (see 116[*b*]).
127[*f*] Shortly after the Roman conquest of Syria the Hasmonean princes asked them to act as arbitrators in an internal dispute. This provided the Romans with an excuse to interfere militarily in Judaea though in any case they had intended to seize it as an appendage of Syria (see (131[*a*]).
128[*a*] Equivalent to approximately a million and a half gold dollars.
129[*b*] The present-day Amman in Jordan.
130[*c*] The Nabataeans.
130[*d*] Papyron is situated at the mouth of the Jordan River on the Dead Sea.
130[*e*] *Phallion the Idumaean's conversion to Judaism* An important development marked the overall policy of the Hasmonean rulers. They tried to establish ties with distinguished families in the border areas of Palestine, close to the Nabataean boundaries. These efforts had marked effects on the political future of Judaea, and the conversion to Judaism of an important Idumaean family in the days of John Hyrcanus falls within this context (*Antiq.* XIII, 257–258). From the start, it had been the Hasmonean policy to tolerate no gentiles in their land; the conquered were asked to convert or to leave. One member of the converted family, Antipas, was appointed governor of Idumaea by the Hasmonean rulers

Nabatean tombs in Petra dug in the rock



[*c*], to go away, but he had to retreat in haste, recalled by domestic troubles in Armenia, already invaded by Lucullus.

4. Aristobulus' rebellion

(117) As Alexandra was becoming ill, her younger son Aristobulus grasped his chance to seize power, and with the aid of his numerous followers, all devoted to him because of his vitality and boldness, took possession of all the strongholds. With the money he found there he recruited a mercenary force and proclaimed himself king. (118) Hyrcanus' complaints [*a*] at these highhanded proceedings moved his mother to take action; she locked up Aristobulus' wife and children in Antonia. This was a fortress adjoining the Temple on the north side, as stated previously [*b*]; it was formerly called Baris, but was given this newer name when Mark Antony's power was at its height, just as the cities of Sebaste [*c*] and Agrippias [*d*] were named after Sebastos (Augustus) and Agrippa. (119) However, before Alexandra could proceed against Aristobulus, she died after a reign of nine years.

Chapter VI

1. The rivalry of Aristobulus and Hyrcanus

(120) Hyrcanus, whom his mother entrusted with the kingdom, was heir to the throne, but he was no match for Aristobulus in capability and courage. The contest for the crown was fought near Jericho, but the bulk of Hyrcanus' troops deserted him and went over to Aristobulus. (121) Hyrcanus, with those who stayed with him, immediately took refuge in the Antonia fortress; they seized Aristobulus' wife and children as hostages for his security. However, the brothers compromised before irreparable harm was done: Aristobulus was to be king and Hyrcanus, having abdicated, would retain all other honors as the king's brother. (122) The reconciliation on these terms took place in the Temple, and surrounded by the people, they warmly embraced each other and exchanged residences, Aristobulus taking over the palace [*a*] and Hyrcanus the house of Aristobulus.

2. Antipater's intervention to reinstate Hyrcanus

(123) Aristobulus' triumph greatly alarmed his enemies, particularly Antipater, an old and bitterly hated foe. By race [*a*] he was an Idumaean, and ancestry, wealth and other sources of power, made him the natural leader of his people. (124) He persuaded Hyrcanus to seek protection from Aretas [*b*] King of Arabia, with a view to recovering his kingdom, and at the same time urged Aretas to receive him and help restore him to the throne. Heaping abuse on Aristobulus and praise on Hyrcanus, he argued that it would surely behoove the sovereign of such a splendid kingdom to extend his aid to the oppressed. Such was the case of Hyrcanus, he said, who was rob-

bed of the crown that belonged to him by birthright. (125) Having prevailed on both parties, Antipater fled the city with Hyrcanus one night, and making all speed, safely reached Petra [*c*], the capital of the Arabian kingdom. (126) There he committed Hyrcanus into the hands of the Arabs, and by dint of much persuasion and well-chosen presents, he induced the king to provide an army, fifty thousand strong, horsemen and foot soldiers, to restore Hyrcanus to power. Aristobulus was unable to withstand this force. He was defeated in the first clash and was driven into Jerusalem [*d*] as his men deserted.

Roman intervention and decline of the Hasmoneans

(127) He would have been captured there soon by a successful assault on the city defenses had not the Roman general Scaurus intervened in the nick of time and put an end to the siege. This commander had been sent to Syria from Armenia by Pompey the Great who was then at war with Tigranes [*e*]. Arriving at Damascus shortly after its capture by Metelleus and Lollius, he superseded these officers. Hearing how things were in Judaea, he hastened there to take advantage of the heaven-sent opportunity to intervene [*f*].

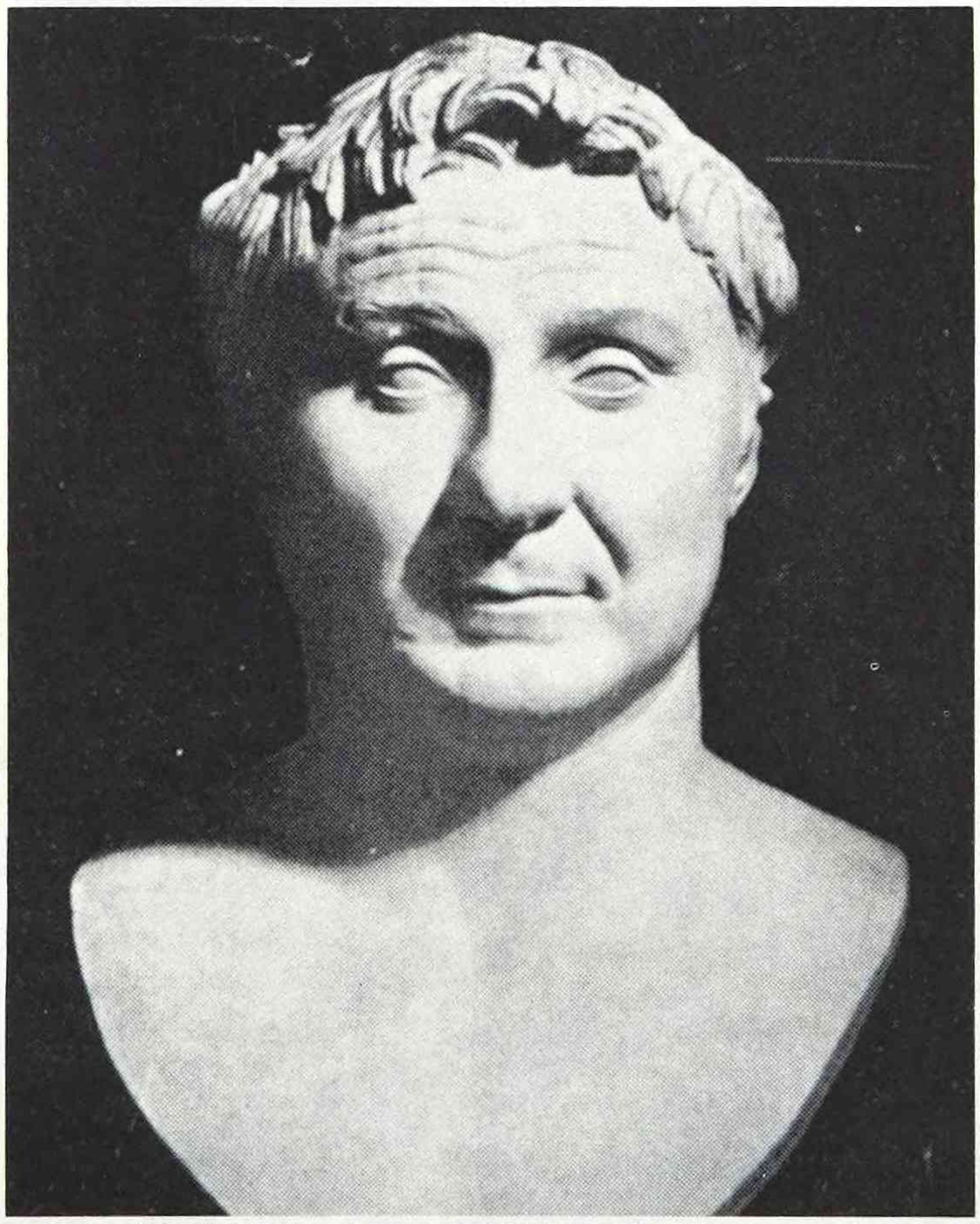
3. (128) As soon as he set foot on Jewish soil, delegations from both brothers arrived seeking his aid. A gift of three hundred talents [*a*] offered by Aristobulus outweighed all other considerations of justice. Once in possession of that sum, Scaurus sent a herald to Hyrcanus and the Arabs threatening them with the presence of Pompey and the Romans unless they lifted the siege. (129) Aretas fled in panic to Philadelphia [*b*] and Scaurus returned to Damascus. (130) Not content with his escape, Aristobulus assembled his forces and pursued the enemy [*c*] to Papyron [*d*], where he fought them, killing over six thousand, among them Phallion [*e*], Antipater's brother.

4. Pompey's support of Hyrcanus

(131) Hyrcanus and Antipater, deprived of Arabian help, transferred their hopes to the other side. When Pompey entered Syria and reached Damascus they sought his protection. They brought no gifts and relied on the same line of arguments as they had used with Aretas, begging him to condemn and repudiate Aristobulus' violent methods and to restore to his throne the man to whom it belonged by birthright and superior character [*a*]. (132) Aristobulus was not far behind. Feeling that Scaurus was open to bribery, he too appeared, decked out in all his regal splendor. However, considering it beneath this dignity to play the obsequious and servile courtier, and unable to abase himself in order to secure his ends, he turned back at the city of Dium.

(*Antiq.* XIV, 10). His son Antipater gained a leading position in the political life of Judaea at the end of the Hasmonean rule. (We know of his brother Phallion, mentioned in the text.) It was Antipas' grandson Herod, who put an end to the Hasmonean dynasty and established the Herodian dynasty.

131[*a*] *The two stories of the delegations to Pompey* Josephus, who draws on two sources (the first and earlier being Nicolaus of Damascus, and the other, the Roman historian Strabo) has been careless in correlating the Roman and the earlier Damascene sources. The order of events is therefore confused. However, the clue is in Josephus' later account in *Antiquities* XIV, 34, 37, 41. In the text above, Josephus mentions the second delegation to Pompey in Damascus (63 BC) before the first, which took place in 64–63 BC at Antioch, where Pompey had spent the winter. When the representatives of the two Hasmonean brothers appeared on that occasion, Aristobulus' delegate presented Pompey with a precious gift—a golden crown shaped like a vine, a delightful work of art—worth five hundred talents, and complained that Gabinius and Scaurus had received considerable bribes from his master. This aroused considerable animosity in the Roman camp and caused Pompey to be suspicious of Aristobulus even before meeting him. He needed time, and therefore invited both parties to appear before him in Damascus in the spring of 63 BC. On this occasion the two brothers appeared accompanied by their supporters. In addition, a third delegation appeared on behalf of the Pharisee party, representing the Jewish "people." This delegation opposed the Hasmonean dynasty, fearing that Judaea would fall into the hands of pretenders, namely Antipater and his Hasmonean protégé Hyrcanus. We have seen (110[*a*]) that due to the people's hatred of the worldly Hasmonean dynasty—in accordance with their Messianic ideology, they equated Hasmonean rule with any other foreign rule—which the Messiah, in his own good time, would cast aside. They therefore suggested to Pompey that he set aside the Hasmonean kingdom. From their point of view, the national kingdom and the Messianic era were incompatible, and one could not be ushered in unless the other was eliminated. Hyrcanus complained to Pompey that despite his seniority he governed only a small part of Judaea, while Aristobulus had taken over the rest of the land. Aristobulus was also represented as an



Pompey

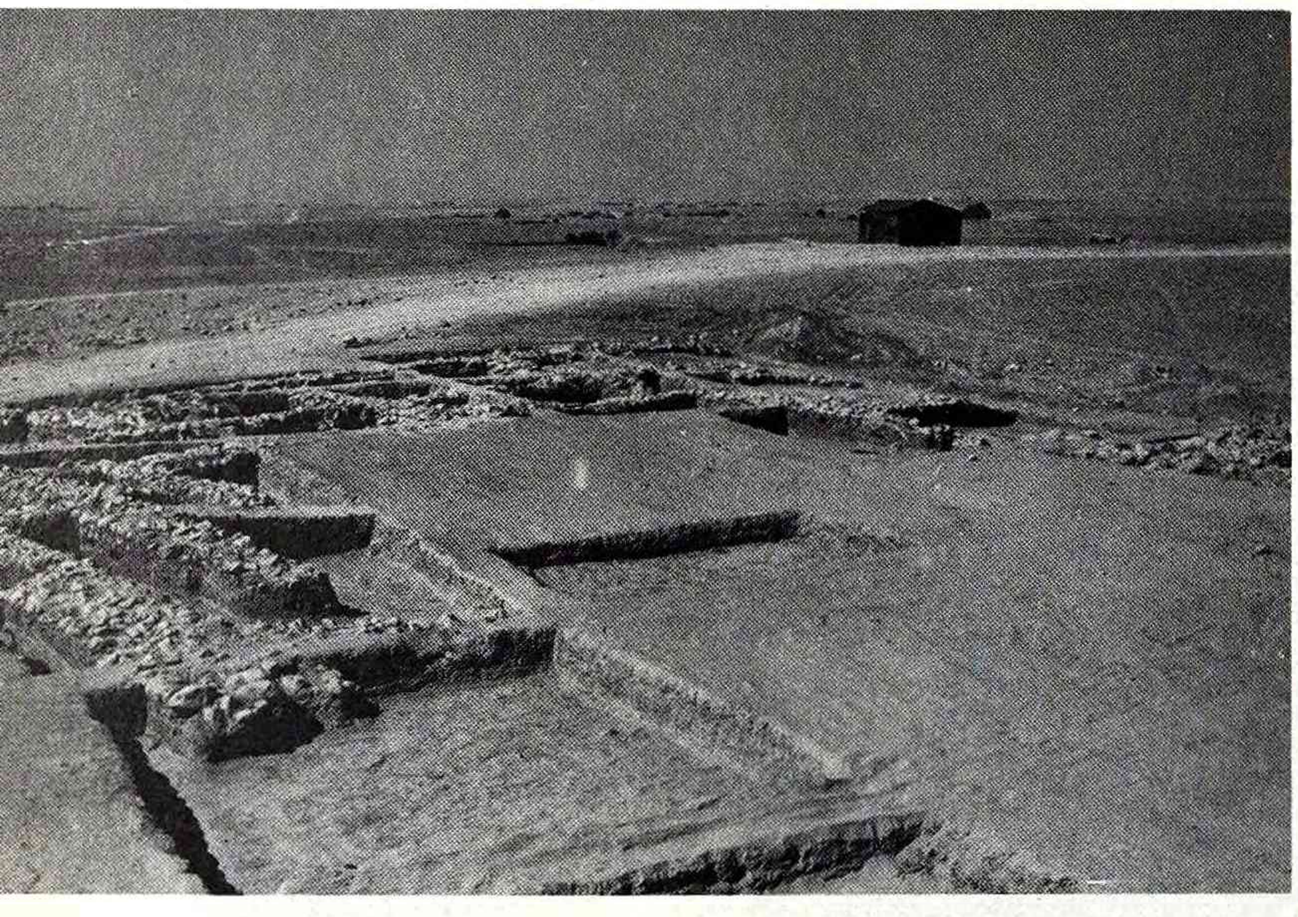
enemy of the Hellenistic cities annexed to Judaea, and thus as an enemy of Rome. Moreover, he was accused of engaging in piracy (which he apparently did). This last argument seemed to be a decisive factor against him as Rome was intent on maintaining the safety of its Mediterranean lines of communication, and Pompey fought pirates relentlessly. He should, therefore, eliminate Aristobulus as he did the pirates.

134[*a*] *Coraea* present Tel-Mazar in Wadi Fara, on the eastern Judaean border. This town, as well as Pella and Scythopolis, was part of the Decapolis, the ten-town province bordering Judaea on the east. See map.

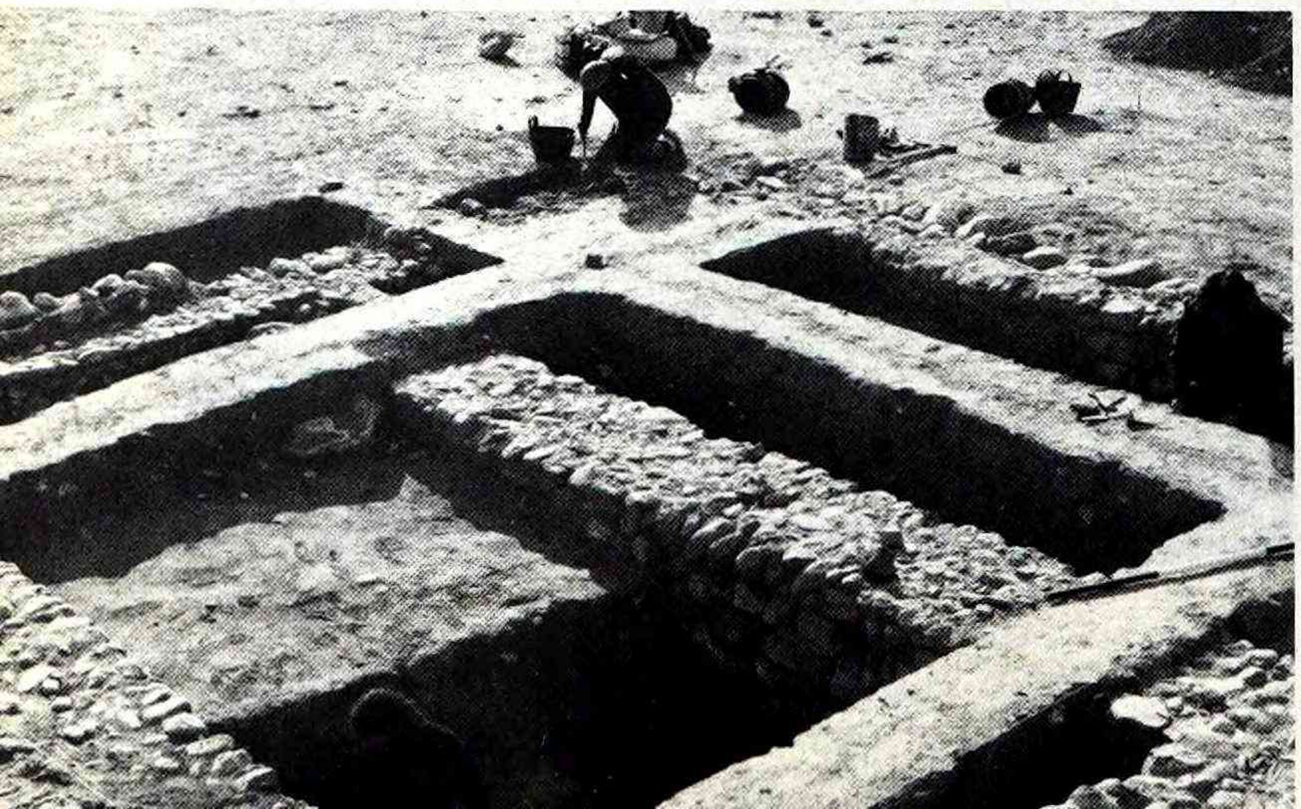
134[*b*] *Alexandrion* modern Sartaba in lower Jordan Valley.

137[*c*] *Was the Hasmonean fratricidal strife responsible for the Roman conquest?* Josephus contends that the fratricidal war opened the borders of Judaea to Pompey. However, in the light of more comprehensive current knowledge of the trends of the period, the historian A. Schalit and others consider that the actions of the Hasmonean princes were not the decisive factor. Had Aristobulus been endowed with more mature statesmanship, he would have realized that absolute independence, the prerogative of his forebears, was no longer possible. With the appearance of Roman might in Syria, drastic transformations swept the region which demanded new political decisions based on a modicum of compromise and a better understanding of Rome's interests and policies in the east. In other words, the changing times suggested the judicious choice of a conciliatory compromise with the Romans instead of abject submission or war. Had Aristobulus acted on the first possibility, he would have been welcomed by Pompey as an "ally and friend of Rome." By abandoning open opposition he would have acquired the advantages later achieved by Antipater and his son Herod (see the sequel in Chapter X) of maintaining a semi-autonomous state within the framework of the Roman Empire. Clearly, as soon as Rome had cast the die in Syria and ended the Seleucid dynasty, it had become a close

The Malhata fort erected by the Hasmonean kings in the Negeb (south) of Judaea



Foot of a watchtower at Malhata



5. Aristobulus preparation for war with Pompey

(133) Pompey stung by Aristobulus' behavior, and yielding to the urgent entreaties of Hyrcanus and his friends, set off in pursuit at the head of the Roman forces and numerous Syrian auxiliaries. (134) Passing Pella and Scythopolis he reached Coreae [*a*], where travelers from the interior cross into Judaea. Informed that Aristobulus had sought refuge in Alexandrion [*b*], one of the most elaborately equipped fortresses perched on a lofty mountain, he sent orders to him to come down. (135) This peremptory summons almost prompted Aristobulus to defy him rather than submit; but he saw how terrified his people were, and his friends impressed upon him that Rome's power was irresistible. Acceding to them, he came down to Pompey, attempted to justify his claim to the throne, and returned to his stronghold. (136) At his brother's request he came down again, reiterated the rights of his case, and returned unhindered by Pompey. Hovering between hope and fear he came down repeatedly, determined, by importunity to talk Pompey into putting everything into his hands, and as often returned to his stonghold to avoid the appearance of prematurely abandoning his case. (137) Finally, Pompey insisted that he evacuate the Judaean fortresses, and as the commanders had instructions to obey only written orders by Aristobulus, he compelled him to send each of them a written order to evacuate. Aristobulus complied, but withdrew to Jerusalem in a rage and prepared to wage war on Pompey [*c*].

The fort of Tamara showing the northwestern tower and wall

Inside the fort of Tamara; covered water-channel led into the central cistern. Occasional rains were the sole source of water in the Negeb

6. Pompey's march on Jerusalem

(138) Pompey allowed him no time to prepare but followed at once, stimulated by the news of Mithridates' death [*a*], received when he was near Jericho. (Its soil is the most fertile in Judaea, producing an abundance of palms and balsam: the stems of the latter are slashed with sharp stones and the resin, which exudes from the incision, is collected drop by drop.) (139) Pompey encamped in Jericho [*b*] for the night and pressed on to Jerusalem at daybreak. Panicking at his approach, Aristobulus met him as a suppliant, and by promising money and the surrender of the city and himself, appeased Pompey's fury. (140) But no part of this agreement was carried out, for when Gabinius was sent to collect the money, he was prevented by Aristobulus' partisans from even entering the city.

Chapter VII

1. Pompey's siege of Jerusalem

(141) Furious at this treatment, Pompey kept Aristobulus in custody. Advancing on the city he reconnoitered to determine the best line of attack, observing the solidity and height of the walls, assessing the formidable effort required for the assault, studying the deep ravine below the ramparts, and beyond the ravine [*a*] the Temple with its own formidable ramparts affording a second line of defense even after the town was captured.

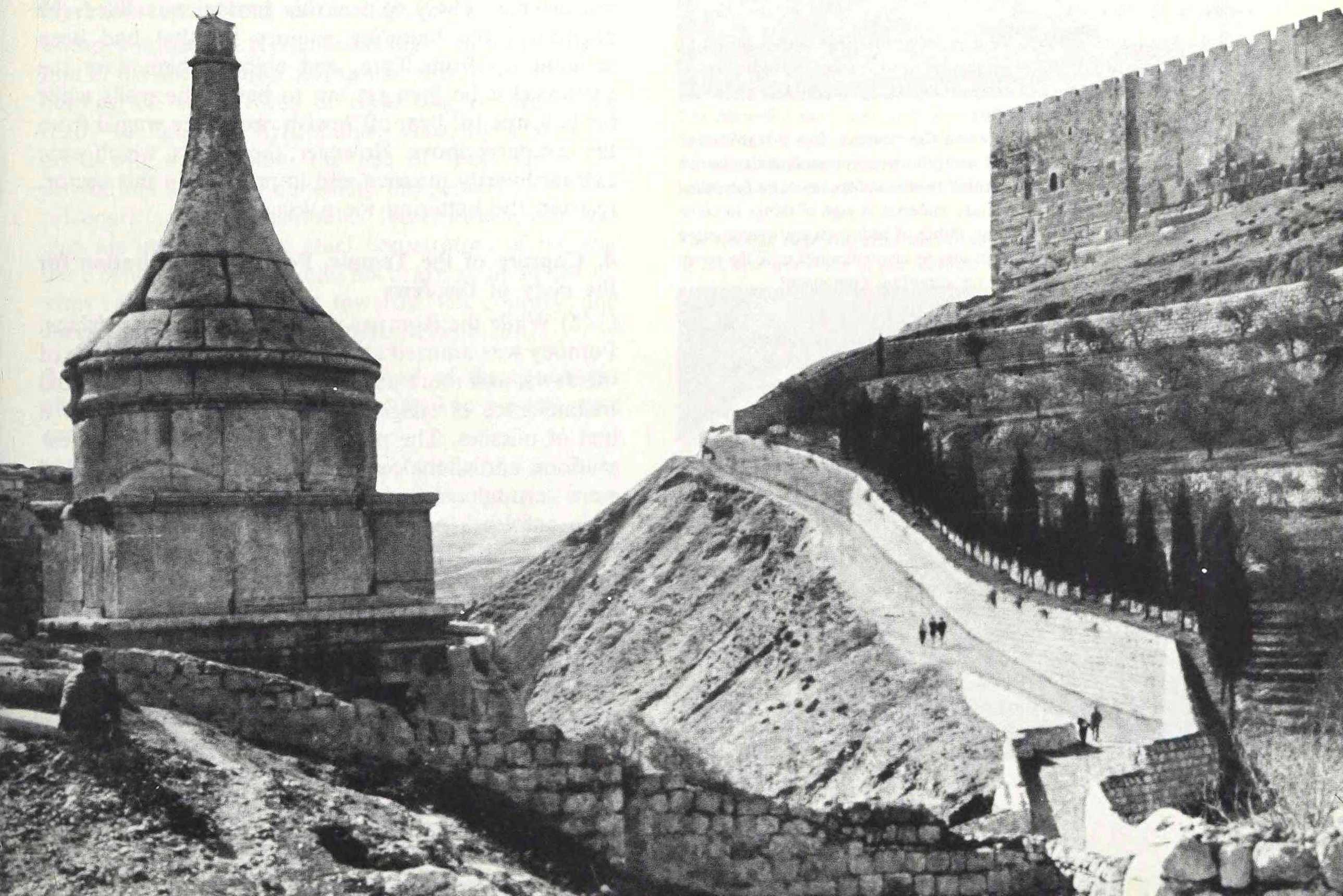
neighbor of Judaea and could not tolerate its absolute independence from the *imperium*. Moreover, Rome had always viewed Judaea as part and parcel, a southern extension, of Syria, and an area adjoining Egypt. Consequently, Pompey's decision not to halt at the borders of Judaea was determined as much by political as by geographic considerations. This reasoning contradicts Josephus' aforementioned rationale, and it suggests a new look at the alternative views of modern historians (A. Schalit, *Herod The King*. pp. 20–21). The conservative Romans probably would have readily negotiated with Aristobulus on a different footing, considering him to be a prince who enjoyed popular backing, and a "self-made" man of imposing presence and charisma. Such a solution might have saved the Hasmonean state. Instead, Pompey stripped Judaea of all the foreign Hellenistic cities conquered by the Hasmoneans in the past (see 155[*a*]), and enabled Antipater and Herod to transform Judaea into a vassal state under Roman tutelage (see Herod's policies). Many scholars have speculated that Hasmonean flexibility regarding coexistence with Rome might have prevented the great War and disaster of AD 70. Aristobulus and his followers did not perceive such flexibility as a political necessity, and Pompey forcefully raped the Hasmonean state. It was unfortunate that when Rome and Judaea came face to face, the violent clash between them was destined to single out the Judaeans as an antagonistic and rebellious people in the imperium. The prejudice formed, and its consequences are discussed later.

138[*a*] Mithridates, King of Pontus in northern Anatolia, who defied Roman expansion in the east.

139[*b*] Jericho had blossomed into a tropical paradise. It was the popular winter resort of the Hasmoneans and later of Herod, as described and illustrated in 407[*a*]–[*b*].

141[*a*] The deep valley of Hinnom between Pompey's camp and the First Wall. Imposing remnants of the city walls built by the Hasmonean kings can be seen on Mount Zion, on the western side of the Old City. Although they were strengthened and extended by King Herod in the following century, they were already, at this earlier date, formidable enough to withstand the Romans for a long time. Consequently, Pompey attacked on the northern side (see 145[*a*]).

The miscalled "Tomb of Absalom" in the Kidron valley east of the ramparts. One of several funeral monuments of the capital's aristocratic families



143[*b*] The bridge in question, now known as Wilson's Arch, was a causeway that spanned the Tyropoeon Valley and led to the principal gate of the fortified Temple area on the west side.

143[*c*] The palace faced the Temple area on the west.

145[*a*] Jerusalem was surrounded by many ravines, but the northern side of the city was most susceptible to assault.

146[*b*] *The Sabbath* Mattathias' regulation (referred to in I Maccabees 2, 41) allowed only defensive operations on the Sabbath. Still, even after this proclamation the enemies of the Jews found it advisable to attack them on the Sabbath because they expected them to be less prepared for battle on that day. In the present case the men of Jerusalem defended themselves only when attacked directly and did not react while the besiegers were building the mounds—a policy that proved disastrous to them. However, the view that military operations on the Sabbath should not be confined to cases of direct aggression became prevalent later, when the Zealots took over.

147[*c*] See illustration of battering rams.

147[*d*] Siege engines or *ballistae* for propelling round stone projectiles.

148[*a*] See 33[*g*].

149[*b*] In 37 BC (and apparently on a Sabbath) according to *Antiquities* XIV, 66–67. The priests were killed while conducting the ritual. According to M. Stern, this is the only date compatible with the political and military events of those years.

149[*c*] See picture of one of the ancient wall towers (on the west side).

149[*d*] Captain of a company of a hundred, a prestigious military rank in Roman military annals.

152[*a*] Meaning the Holy of Holies (Debir), the third small innermost chamber, accessible only to the high priest. The sacred objects mentioned were situated in the second hall, the *Hekhal,* the largest hall of the Temple, and not the Debir.

152[*b*] The daily morning and evening whole-offerings were accompanied by the burning of incense on the great golden altar within the Temple. This was a communal offering and it consisted of many ingredients to create the smoke. The incense was prepared once a year, stored and divided into three hundred and sixty-five daily *minas:* half was burned in the morning and half in the afternoon. Twice a year the incense was sent to the mills to be ground very fine.

152[*c*] Two thousand talents were equivalent to six million silver shekels at the then-going rate.

153[*d*] The purification rite went much further than merely cleansing the ravages of war, as it involved a ritual to wipe away the defilement of the sanctuary at the hands of heathen. See 105[*g*] on the risk of defiling the Holy Land and the Holy City.

153[*e*] *The rebellious peasantry and the Romans* Every Hasmonean rebel against Roman rule found powerful support among the Jewish peasantry, especially the discontented landless elements, who furnished the leaders with good human military material. A sign of things to come appeared in the uprising of Ezekias, father of Judas, several years before Herod's accession, and the conflict was to be continuous until the rebellion of AD 66, of which it was an important component.

154[*a*] His name was Absalom.

154[*b*] *Under tribute* In the process, Hyrcanus, though recognized as high priest under Roman guardianship, was given no political authority; even his title ethnarch (ruler) was withheld. The dismemberment of the Hasmonean state by depriving it of the captured Hellenistic cities, as itemized in the text, was near.

155[*a*] A city in the Decapolis, southeast of the Sea of Galilee; also immortalized by the story in Matthew 8, 28 ff. The list of cities severed from the Hasmonean state is far from complete in Josephus' writings. They were all in the province of Decapolis.

156[*b*] Hippos in the Decapolis; Scythopolis (Beth-Shean) in the Jordan Valley; Pella (east of the Sea of Galilee); Samaria (in central Palestine); Jamnia (Yabneh) and Azotus (Ashdod).

156[*c*] By detaching the southern coastal cities (62 BC) after defeating Aristobulus, Pompey put a stop to Hasmonean attempts to develop this area as a new center of Mediterranean trade, at the same time wrenching from the Jews the strategic corridor to Egypt, thus throttling any attempt at expansion which could endanger exclusive Roman domination over their "Mare Nostrum" (Our Sea).

2. (142) However, while Pompey was still undecided, sedition broke out inside the city walls; Aristobulus' partisans insisted on waging war and rescuing the king, while Hyrcanus' men urged opening the gates to Pompey. The numbers of the latter were swelled by fear of the awe-inspiring discipline and battle formation of the Roman soldiers. (143) When Aristobulus' partisans were losing the struggle, they withdrew into the Temple area, cut off the bridge [*b*] linking it with the city, and prepared to fight to the death. The other group admitted the Romans into the city and surrendered the Palace [*c*], to which Pompey sent a large body of troops under Piso, his second-in-command. (144) This officer posted sentry-groups throughout the town, and failing to persuade the insurgents in the Temple area to come to terms, he removed all obstructions near the walls and prepared the ground for an assault, finding Hyrcanus' supporters free with advice and assistance.

3. (145) Pompey, posted on the north side [*a*], was busy banking up the trench and the ravine with material collected by his troops. This proved a very difficult task due to the tremendous depth that had to be filled, and the obstructions to which they were exposed from the Jews on the ramparts. (146) The Roman legions would never have been able to complete the task had Pompey not utilized the Sabbath days, when Jews refrain from all manual work. He proceeded to raise the earthworks on those days, while keeping his men from engaging in armed clashes; for on the Sabbath [*b*] the Jews fight only in self-defense. (147) When this ravine was filled, he positioned the battering engines [*c*] that had been brought up from Tyre, and erected them over the earthworks; he then set out to batter the walls while his ballistae [*d*] beat off Jewish resistance waged from the ramparts above. However, the towers, which were extraordinarily massive and impressive in this sector, resisted the battering for a long time.

4. Capture of the Temple. Pompey's admiration for the piety of the Jews

(148) While the Romans were subjected to hardships, Pompey was amazed at the unshakeable endurance of the Jews, and more particularly at their uninterrupted maintenance of religious practices in the midst of a hail of missiles. The permanent sacrifices [*a*], the expiations, and all the ceremonials in the worship of God were scrupulously performed, just as if the city had been enfolded in perfect peace. On the very day the Temple was captured, when they were being slain around the sacrificial altar, they never abandoned the rites ordained for the day. (149) In the third month of siege [*b*], when after great difficulty they overthrew one of the towers and breached the wall [*c*], the Romans burst into the Temple area. The first to scale the wall was Faustus Cornelius, son of sylla, and after him came two centurions [*d*], Furius and Fabius.

They were followed by their companies who encircled the Temple courts and slew their victims, those who had fled into the sanctuary and others who offered brief resistance.

5. (150) Though they saw the enemy advancing sword in hand, many of the priests calmly kept up their sacred rites; they were butchered in the act of offering libations and burning incense, putting the service of God above the preservation of their own lives. Most of the slain were killed by their own countrymen of the rival faction; countless others threw themselves down precipices; some, driven mad by their hopeless plight, set fire to the buildings around the wall of the inner courts and were consumed in the flames. (151) Twelve thousand Jews perished; very few Romans were killed, though many were wounded.

6. Pompey's entrance into the sanctuary

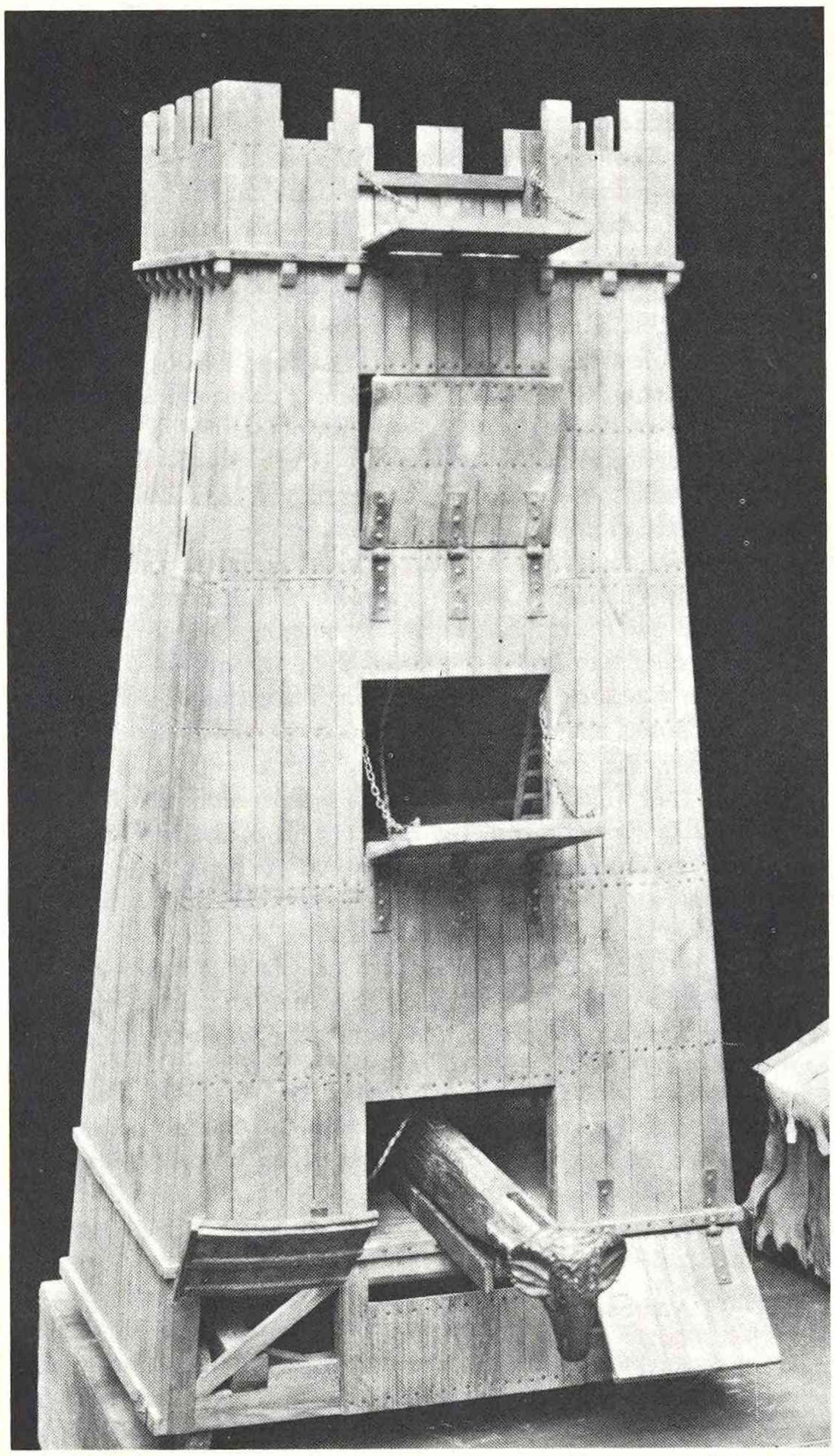
(152) Of all the disasters of that period, none wounded the nation to the heart so deeply as the exposure of the hitherto concealed holy place to alien eyes. Indeed, together with his staff, Pompey entered the sanctuary [*a*], which no one but the high priest was permitted to enter, and beheld its contents: the candelabrum and lamps, the table, the vessels of libation and censers, all of solid gold, an accumulation of spices [*b*], and a treasury of consecrated money totaling two thousand talents [*c*]. (153) But he did not lay hands either on these nor on any other sacred treasures, and on the day after the capture, he ordered the custodians to purify [*d*] it and to resume the customary sacrifices.

Hyrcanus recognized as the high priest

Pompey reinstated Hyrcanus as high priest in recognition of his cooperation during the siege, particularly in holding off the crowds of rural folk [*e*] who were ready to fight for Aristobulus. Thus, by a show of good will, rather than the use of sheer terror, he proved his ability to conciliate the people. (154) The prisoners included Aristobulus' father-in-law, who was also his uncle [*a*]. The chief perpetrators of the war were beheaded. Faustus and his brave companions-at-arms received magnificent rewards. The country, and Jerusalem itself, were laid under tribute [*b*].

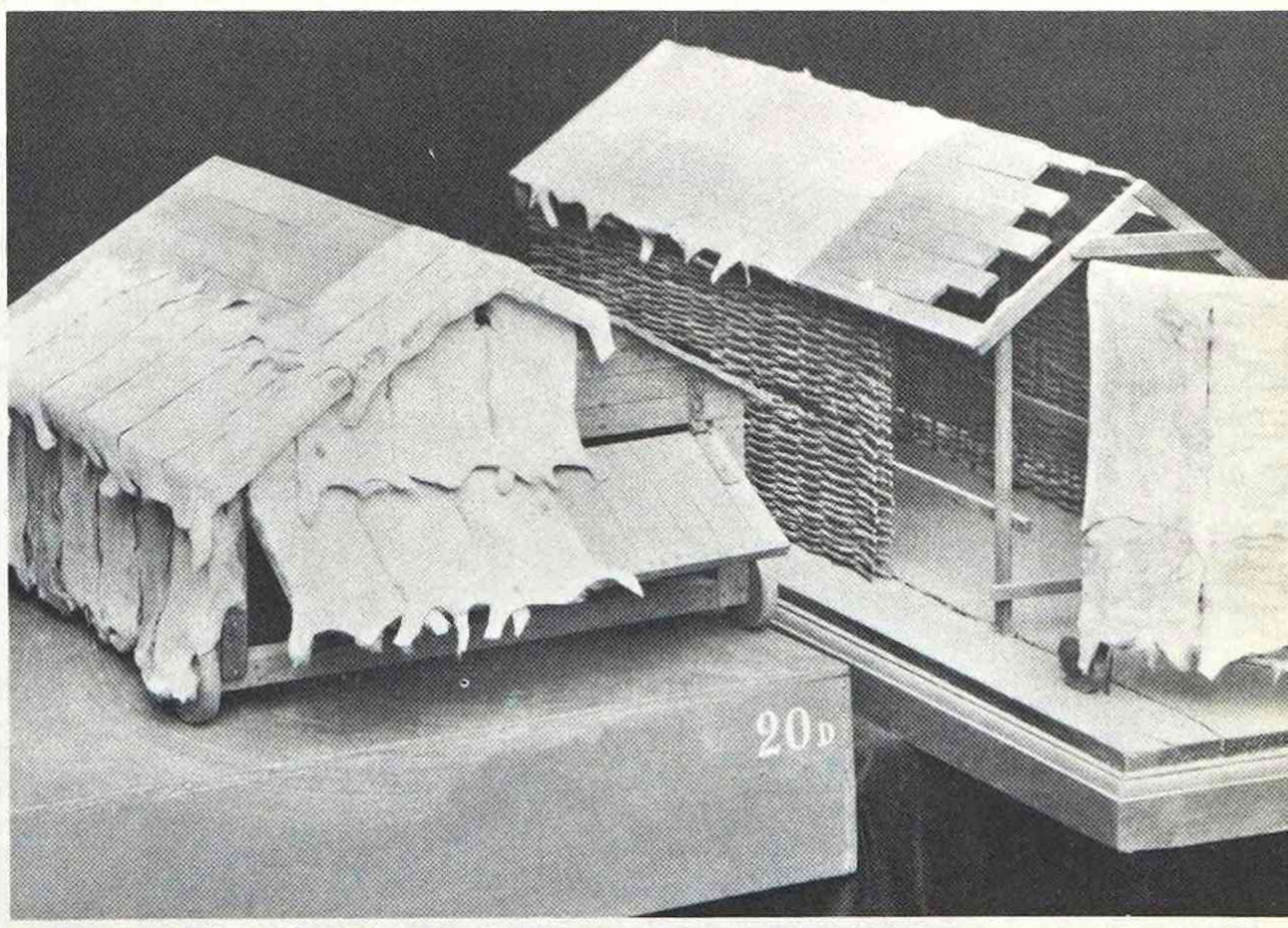
7. The Hasmonean state deprived of the conquered cities and provinces; Judaea reduced to a small rural area

(155) Pompey next deprived the Jews of the northern cities they had occupied in Coele-Syria, placing them under a specially appointed Roman governor, thus confining the nation within its own traditional boundaries. He rebuilt Gadara [*a*], formerly destroyed by the Jews, to gratify Demetrius, a Gadarene freedman. (156) He also freed all the inland towns [*b*], that the Jews had not already destroyed, from Hasmonean rule: Hippos, Scythopolis, Pella, Samaria, Jamnia, Maresha, Azotus and Arethusa; also the coastal towns [*c*] of Gaza, Joppa, Dora, and the city known



The battering ram's use in sieges is described in Josephus' War *III, 214–218. Its effectiveness and mechanism are verified by Marcus Vitruvius, the famous Roman engineer of the first century BC. Vitruvius' other descriptions will be shown below*

The wheeled siege platforms were covered with oxhides for the protection of the men stationed in the machine to batter the wall



156[*d*] This is relevant to the agrarian and economic problem in Palestine: In the ancient East, hardly any urban centers depended upon imports for their food supplies; all inhabited towns and areas derived their subsistence from their own local agriculture, as was the case in first century BC Palestine. It is relevant at this point to note that in *Against Apion* I, 60 Josephus pointed out that the Jews did not inhabit coastal territory nor associate with Greeks or Phoenicians on the coast and engage in active trade. Josephus' statements were influenced by his endeavor to buttress his claim for the priority and independence of Jews as pioneers of culture by explaining why they had not come into earlier contact with the Greeks. Although this statement cannot stand up to criticism, Josephus' claim rests on a measure of contemporary fact: ever since the time of Pompey and Gabinius, the coastal towns of Palestine had been overwhelmingly repopulated by Greek-speaking Phoenicians and Syrians, and the Jews lived preponderantly in the hinterland where they maintained their important towns and villages. Josephus supplies the reader with facts, but his interpretations are more idealistic than those of modern historians; they are far from reflecting the situation that existed after the Hasmonean expansion and the eventual rise of an influential group with financial interests and international contacts, in Jerusalem or Caesarea. But the Hellenizing tendencies of these affluent men was opposed, and ultimately defeated, by a combination led by the sages (rabbis), the rural priesthood, the urban lower class and the peasantry. They vindicated their national independence and faith, and perpetuated the leadership of the Hasmoneans in the form of a new dynasty of high priests before Herod's time. In sum, the loss of the coastal plain following Pompey's drastic reorganization meant the creation of a large class of landless Jewish peasants. Added to this, the cutting off of the Decapolis from the Judaean state must have thrown a considerable number of Jews back upon agriculture. This situation (widely ignored by historians) would have done much to foment the stormy atmosphere of the period ending in AD 70.

157[*a*] During the first stage of Roman rule Judaea was still *not* formally regarded as a "province," but a vassal state and part of the area governed by Scaurus.

157[*b*] In the east.

157[*c*] In Anatolia.

159[*a*] Scaurus marched on Petra in 62 BC. The "Arabia" referred to by Josephus is synonymous with the desert domain of the Nabataeans. It should not be confused with our modern concept of medieval Arab history and culture. The Nabataeans appeared on the scene of history between the early third century BC and the second-third centuries AD, and disappeared into oblivion even before the rise of Islam. The Nabataean territories ranged further north than geographic Arabia and comprised Sinai, south Palestine (Negev) and Transjordan. Further details about the Nabataeans and their capital Petra, are mentioned in 125[*c*] and 365[*c*].

at first as Straton's Tower, which was given the name Caesarea when it was reconstructed by Herod with magnificent structures. He restored all these towns to their legitimate citizens [*d*] and annexed them to the province of Syria.

Beginning of Roman provincial rule

(157) He entrusted that province [*a*], along with Judaea and the whole region extending as far as Egypt and as far as the Euphrates [*b*], to the administration of Scaurus, along with two legions. He himself marched in haste across the land of Cilicia [*c*] on his way to Rome. He took Aristobulus and his family with him as prisoners. (158) Of the two sons and daughters, one son, Alexander, made his escape en route. The younger brother, Antigonus, was conducted to Rome with his sisters.

Chapter VIII

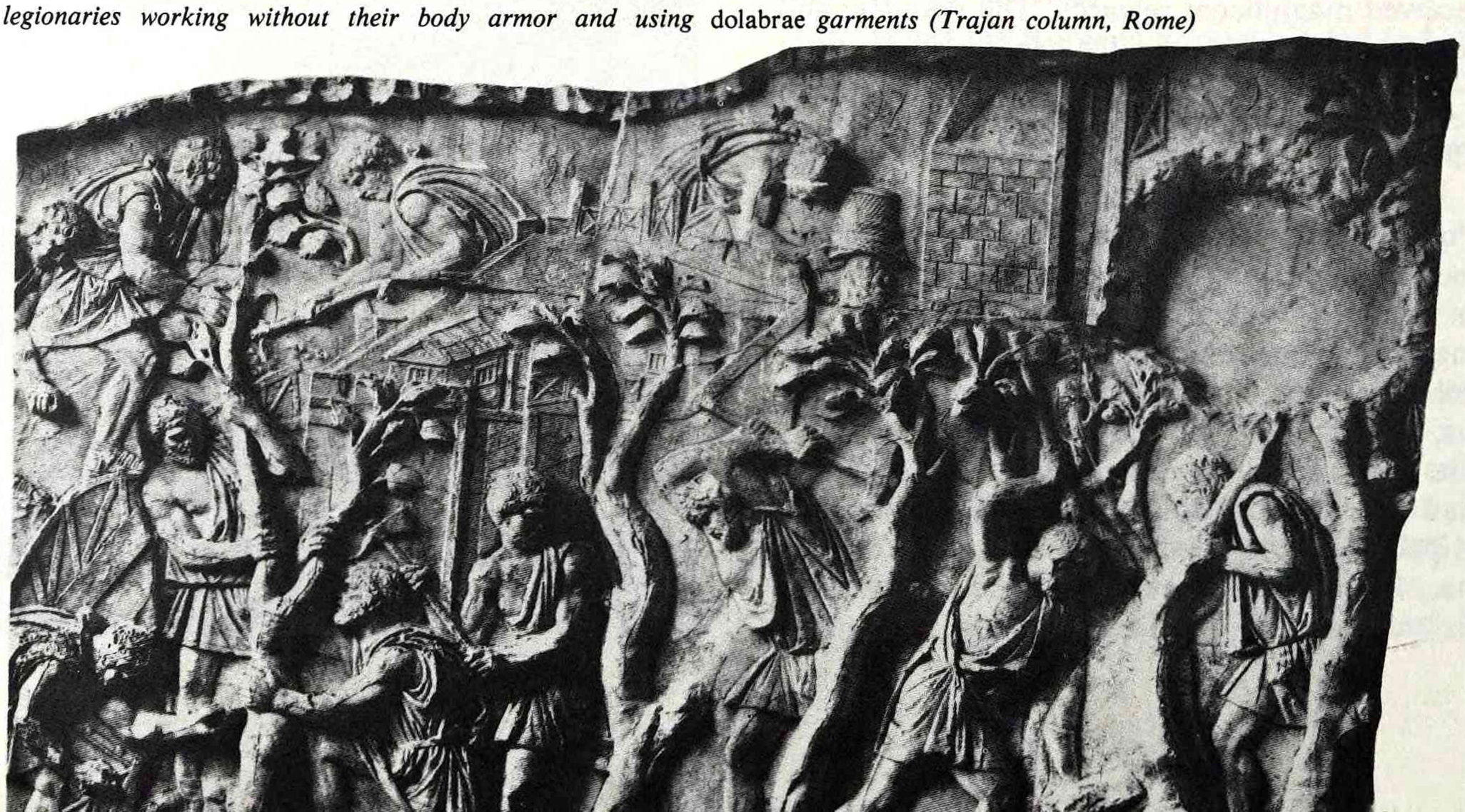
1. Antipater's intervention between Scaurus and Aretas

(159) Meanwhile, General Scaurus invaded Arabia [*a*], but his progress was held up at Petra because of the difficult desert and mountainous terrain, which was impassable. He followed a scorched earth policy in the surrounding countryside, but his army suffered severely from lack of food. Eventually Hyrcanus sent Antipater along with supplies. The latter, who had maintained friendly relations with Aretas, was commissioned by Scaurus to negotiate the cessation of hostilities. The Arab monarch was persuaded to make a payment of three hundred talents; on these terms Scaurus removed his army from Arabia.

2. Alexander's rebellion and the Hasmonean last stand

(160) Alexander, Aristobulus' son who escaped from Pompey's escort on the way to Rome, gathered a large force that set out to overrun Judaea and harass Hyrcanus; after advancing to Jerusalem, he brazenly attempted to rebuild the section of the wall destroyed by Pompey. He might have succeeded in unseating Hyrcanus had not Gabinius [*a*] been sent to Syria to

Roman legionaries working without their body armor and using dolabrae *garments (Trajan column, Rome)*



succeed Scaurus as governor. Gabinius, who had shown his worth on many other occasions, marched against Alexander. (161) Alarmed at his approach, Alexander increased .the strength of his army to ten thousand foot soldiers and fifteen hundred horsemen, also fortifying the strategic strongholds of Alexandrion [*b*], Hyrcania and Machaerus, which faced the districts near the Arabian mountains.

3. (162) Gabinius sent Mark Antony ahead with part of his army and followed in person with the main body. Antipater and his hand-picked men, with other Jewish forces under Malichus and Peitholaus [*a*], joined forces with Antony's commanders and proceeded against Alexander. Shortly afterwards they were joined by Gabinius and his heavy infantry. (163) Unable to withstand these combined forces Alexander retreated, but was forced to give battle near Jerusalem losing six thousand casualties in the engagement, half of them killed and half taken prisoner. He fled with the survivors to Alexandrion.

4. (164) Gabinius, pursuing him there, found many of Alexander's men encamped before the stronghold. Before attacking he tried to win them over by promising to pardon them. When they proudly refused, he slew a large number and shut the rest into the fortress. (165) Mark Antony, the commanding officer, was the hero of the engagement, and the valor he displayed on the battlefield was never so conspicuously demonstrated as it was here. Gabinius left a force sufficient to reduce the stronghold and proceeded to restore order in the cities that had not been devastated, and to rebuild those that he found in ruins. (166) Among the towns that were re-established were Scythopolis, Samaria, Anthedon, Apollonia, Jamnia, Raphia, Maresha, Adoraim, Gamla, Azotus and many other towns. Their former inhabitants gladly flocked back [*a*].

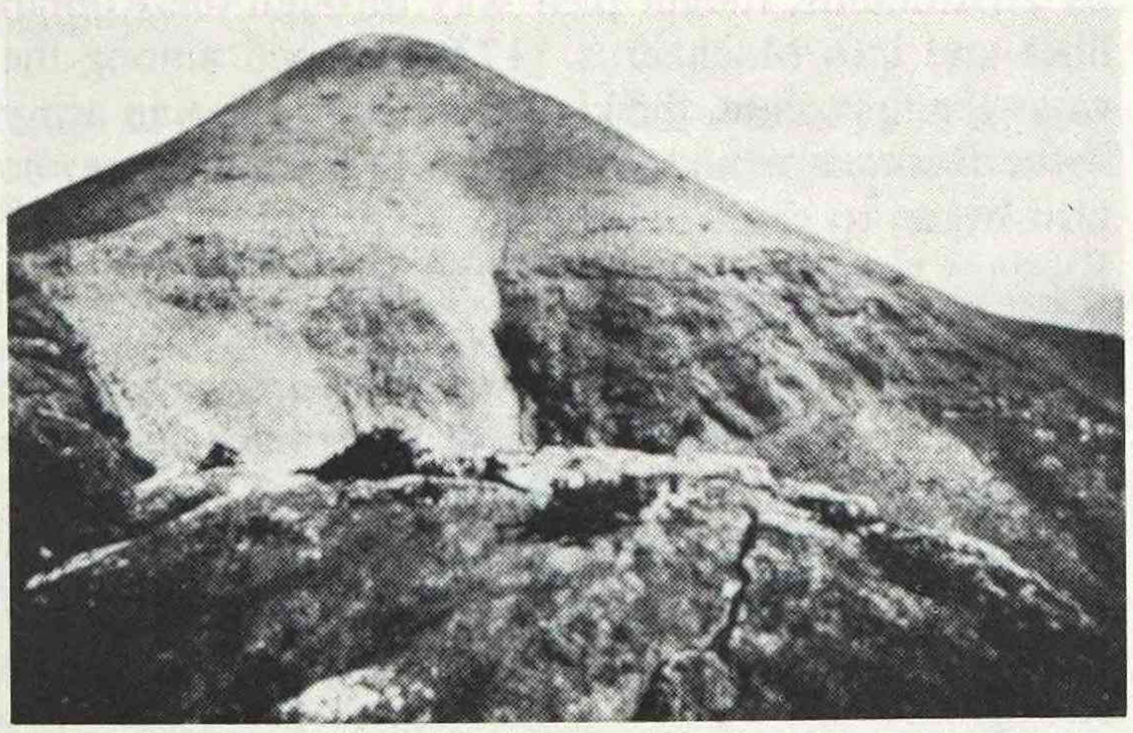
160[*a*] *The revolt against Gabinius* The royal prerogatives of Alexander, son of Aristobulus the pretender (see para. 158), were ignored, and he could only claim his rights to the high priesthood; but this title was granted to Hyrcanus as a reward for his aid to Pompey during the war in Judaea, and his efforts to pacify the people to prevent them from joining forces with Aristobulus. The rebuilding of the western city wall was also prevented by the presence of the Romans at the site (referred to in Antiquities XIV, 5, 18-23). Alexander's campaign reflected a Jewish patriotic attempt to counter the dismemberment of the Hasmonean state and the repatriation of the Hellenistic pagans to the border towns from which they formerly had been expelled as the Hasmoneans expanded their territories.

161[*b*] Alexandrion is identified with the Qarn Sartaba remains of a Maccabean fortress in the lower Jordan Valley. Hyrcania, or Tell Mird, lies southeast of Jerusalem in the wilderness of Judaea (see map). Machaerus lies east of the Dead Sea (see 171[*a*], map and illustration).

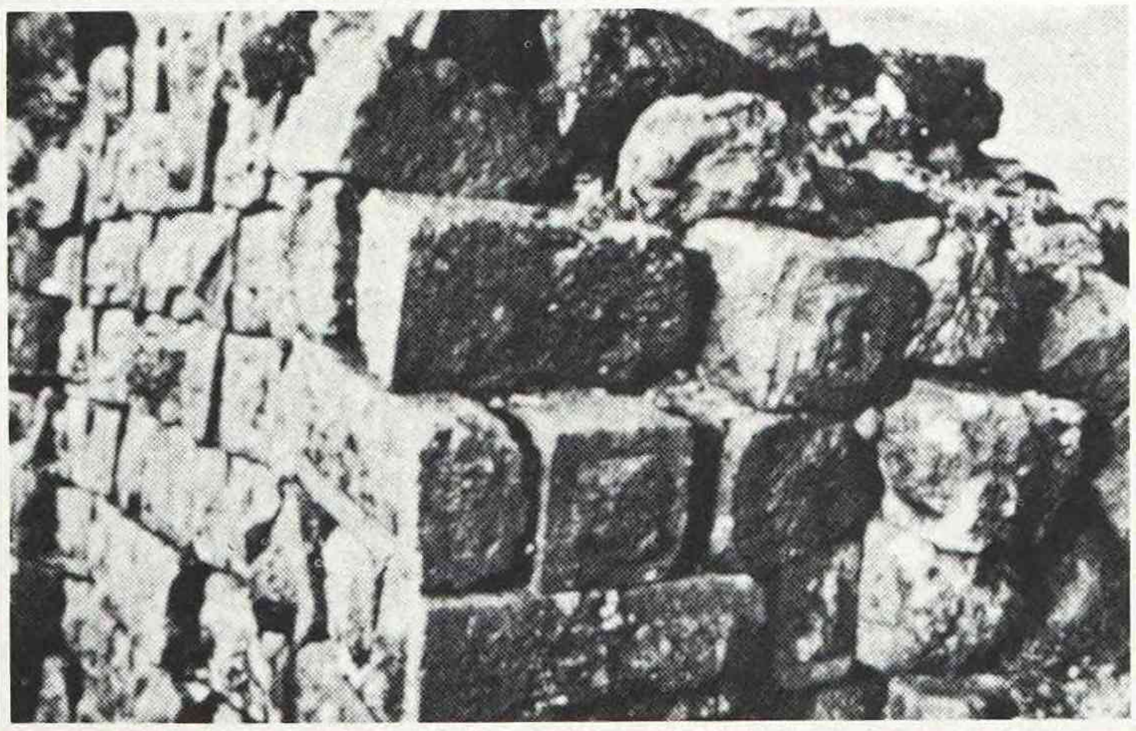
162[*a*] *The Roman policy* Gabinius' term as governor of Judaea lasted from 57–55 BC. Mark Antony, mentioned here, is the future Roman triumvir of immortal fame. Gabinius was aided by Roman volunteers, and probably by Jews who remained faithful to Hyrcanus, among them the commanders Malichus and Peitholaus.

166[*a*] The towns referred to were situated on the borders of the Judaean province in the third century BC, before their inclusion in the Jewish state as a result of the Hasmonean conquests. The ethnic composition of the towns mentioned was not mainly Jewish—Syrians and other ethnic colonists were the previous settlers of the towns of Dora, Samaria, Azotus, Scythopolis, Anthedon, Raphia, Adoraim, Maresha, Gaza, Joppa, Apollonia, Jamnia, Gamla and others, that were later incorporated into the larger Judaea by Alexander Jannaeus. When they were "repeopled" in turn by gentile colonists, they were declared "free" by Roman fiat and formally annexed to the new province of Syria (see 157[*a*]) or granted autonomous rule. Consequently, over-population generated rivalry between the old Jewish and new gentile "colonists," in addition to interracial clashes that were on the increase in Galilee and the border districts. They are analyzed further on (see 204[*a*]). (Significance of the Ezekias uprising.) To summarize, Roman policy laid down by Pompey was to limit Jewish rule even in the border areas predominantly occupied by them. Not satisfied with severing the coastal and inland towns, populated mainly by gentiles, from the state, the Romans also wanted to use them as a counterbalance to the Jews. Looking ahead, they sought Jewish aristocrats and notables who could promote this policy, such as they found in the person of Antipater, a Jewish proselyte of Idumaean origin. Antipater turned out to be the man responsible for Hyrcanus' victory over his brother Aristobulus in the struggle for the Jewish throne. Antipater was perceptive enough to grasp that the Hasmonean dream of complete independence had become an irrevocable anachronism with the arrival of Roman imperialism in Syria and Palestine; he astutely comprehended that the Jews must learn to coexist

Site of the Alexandrion fortress (Qarn Sartaba) in the lower Jordan valley



Southwestern corner of the Alexandrion, attributed to the Hasmonean period



with the Romans if they wished to enjoy the restricted internal autonomy usually granted by Rome to submissive allies. Gabinius realized that the relevant political steps taken by Pompey were inadequate. In order to root out the danger the Roman authorities would have to deal with the people, the majority of whom supported Aristobulus and his dynasty in their revolt against the Roman legates. A different form of administration was required, similar to that established in other countries of the East conquered by Pompey (see 170[*a*]).

167[*a*] Alexander was free to go, but he was stripped of power. The sources make no further mention of him, though he was compensated by marrying Hyrcanus' daughter.

170[*a*] *The partition of Judaea by Gabinius* The general conduct of public affairs by the "aristocracy" refers to the traditional "Community of the Jews" or Sanhedrin. In pursuing the Roman policy of *divide et impera* (divide and rule), Gabinius divided the country into five *Synedria* or Synods. These five new councils were known as local *Synedryot:* Judaea proper, limited to the south, had councils in Jerusalem and Jericho; the Galilee was represented by one council in Sepphoris; Jewish Transjordan was represented by two councils: one in Gadara (Gedor), identified as E-tell in Peraea, near modern es-Salt in Jordan, and the other in Amathus (Hamthan), southeast of the Sea of Galilee (map). Another council, not mentioned here, served the Idumaean province in its chief town Adoraim. Samaria was a province apart. This was Rome's plan to break up Jewish autonomy, as well as its economic and cultural coherence. Gabinius appointed Antipater over the five *Synedryot* (including Idumaea), and made him responsible for maintaining the peace in the country and for the collection of taxes, while Hyrcanus, as high priest, had the right to administer the nation's internal affairs according to the laws of Israel. The traditional make-up of the aristocracy, as understood by Josephus, included the "first of the city," "leaders of the people," the "notables," the "leading man," and the "most prominent citizens." This is in accord with the Gospels' reference (Luke 19, 47) to the "chief priests and the scribes, and the principal men of the people." In any case, the great Sanhedrin was broken up, and Jerusalem and its vicinity presumably remained a kind of theocratic or Temple state under the High Priest, while the other districts were governed by the aforementioned *Synedryot* of leading, collaborating Jews. This arrangement followed the general Roman policy of weakening or even abolishing Temple states and replacing them with secular entities. If Gabinius' object had been to diminish the political power of the great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, there is little doubt that the diyision also affected the religious supremacy of this prestigious body at about this time (57 BC). This state of affairs was not permanent and was due to change in Herod's united kingdom.

171[*a*] The steep cliff at Machaerus (Michwar in Hebrew, near Kasr el Meshneke in Arabic) east of and overlooking the Dead Sea, had been fortified by King Alexander Jannaeus. After Gabinius destroyed it, as related earlier, Herod rebuilt it as a stronghold against the Nabataeans and established a town nearby. Details of the water installations, fortifications, and the war tactics during the siege by Bassus appear in *War VII,* 190–209. Cf. II, 485, VII, 164–189.

173[*b*] 56 BC. Judaean affairs were then controlled directly by the Roman Senate, contrary to later custom.

174[*c*] See 168.

175[*a*] When the people of Alexandria drove Ptolemy Philopater Philadelphus Auletes XI from the throne in 58 BC, he left no stone unturned in Rome to secure his reinstatement, even enlisting the prestigious support of the great orator Cicero. He also persuaded Gabinius to undertake a campaign to achieve his restoration by giving him a bribe of ten thousand talents (55 BC). Antipater, in pursuit of his collaboration policy, made himself most useful to Gabinius. He persuaded the mercenary Jewish forces garrisoned at the Egyptian border fortress at Pelusium to open the gates of Egypt to the Romans.

175[*b*] The frontier town in western Sinai.

177[*c*] The decisive battle that broke the back of Alexander's rebellion took place near Mount Tabor. Many Galileans, faithful followers of the Hasmoneans, must have taken part in the engagement. The others took refuge on Mount Gerizim overlooking the town of Shechem.

178[*d*] Gabinius managed to subdue the rebels but was recalled to Rome, giving up his post as legate to Syria. Cicero had already demanded his return in 56 BC.

5. The country's partition into five councils

(167) These arrangements completed, Gabinius returned to Alexandrion and intensified the siege so vigorously that Alexander, abandoning all hope, sent a herald to ask pardon for his offenses and to surrender the fortresses of Hyrcania and Machaerus, still in his possession; he subsequently gave up Alexandrion as well [*a*]. (168) Gabinius destroyed all these strongholds to prevent their being used as a base of operations for another war. In fact, he was prompted by Alexander's mother who was concerned for her husband and remaining children, held captive in Rome. (169) Gabinius reinstated Hyrcanus in Jerusalem, committing to him custody of the Temple, but leaving the administration of public and national affairs to members of the nation's aristocracy. (170) He subdivided the land into five councils [*a*], one centered in Jerusalem, the second in Gadara, the third with Amathus as its administrative center, the fourth was allotted to Jericho, the fifth to Sepphoris, a city of Galilee. The Jews were happy to be freed from the domination of a single ruler and were henceforth governed by an aristocracy.

6. A fresh revolt and the capture of Aristobulus

(171) The nation was soon involved in fresh trouble when Aristobulus escaped from Rome; he rallied a large number of Jews, some eager for political change, others long since his fervent followers. His first step was to seize Alexandrion and restore its fortifications; on hearing that Gabinius had sent an army under Sisenna, Antony and Servianos, he retired towards Machaerus [*a*]. (172) Encumbered by a useless rabble, he kept only eight thousand armed men; along with them was Peitholaus, the second-in-command in Jerusalem, who defected to him with a thousand men. The Romans pursued them, and in the engagement that followed, Aristobulus and his men offered fierce and successful resistance, holding their ground for a long time, but ultimately they were overpowered by the Romans. Five thousand men fell, two thousand escaped onto a mountain, and the last thousand, led by Aristobulus, fought their way through the Roman lines and into Machaerus. (173) Camped among the ruins the first night, the king planned to raise an army if the Romans would give him a breathing space; he also began to erect some weak fortifications. But the Romans soon attacked, and after holding out for two days, he was captured. He and his son Antigonus, who had shared his escape from Rome, were brought in fetters to Gabinius, who sent them back to Rome once more [*b*]. (174) The Roman Senate imprisoned Aristobulus, but his children were allowed to return to Judaea, in accordance with Gabinius' promise to Aristobulus' wife, in return for the surrender of the strongholds [*c*].

7. Alexander's second rebellion; Gabinius in Egypt and at war with the Arabs

(175) Gabinius had set out on an expedition against the Parthians when he was recalled from the Euphrates to restore Ptolemy to the Egyptian throne [*a*]. Hyrcanus and Antipater placed considerable resources at the governor's disposal in support of the campaign. Besides the money, weapons, grain and auxiliaries provided by Antipater, he also persuaded the Jewish frontier garrison at Pelusium [*b*] to let Gabinius through. (176) In his absence there were uprisings all over Syria, and the Jews were once again stirred to rebellion by Alexander, son of Aristobulus, who recruited a large army, swept through Judaea and proceeded to massacre the Romans. (177) Thoroughly alarmed, Gabinius rushed back from Egypt. He sent Antipater ahead to win over the rebels and met with some success. Thirty thousand men, however, were still determined to fight under Alexander [*c*]. They fought Gabinius near Mount Tabor and lost ten thousand men, the rest fled and dispersed. (178) Gabinius then returned to Jerusalem and reorganized the government [*d*] along lines proposed by Antipater. Then he marched against the Arabs and defeated them. He secretly released Mithridates and Orsanes, two fugitives from Parthia, informing his soldiers that they had escaped.

8. Crassus' plunder of the Temple

(179) At this point Crassus arrived to take over the governorship of Syria from Gabinius. To provide for the campaign against the Parthians, he stripped the Temple of Jerusalem of all the gold, including the two thousand talents left untouched by Pompey [*a*]. He then crossed the Euphrates and perished there with his army [*b*]; this however, is not relevant to our story. (180) Following Crassus' disaster, the Parthians crossed the Euphrates and advanced into Syria. But Cassius, who had escaped from Parthia to the Syrian border, drove them back. Having secured Syria, he hastened to Judaea after capturing Tarichaea [*c*], where he reduced thirty thousand Jews to slavery and killed Peitholaus, who was trying to rally Aristobulus' partisans to rebellion [*d*]. Actually, Antipater had recommended this execution in order to quell the agitation.

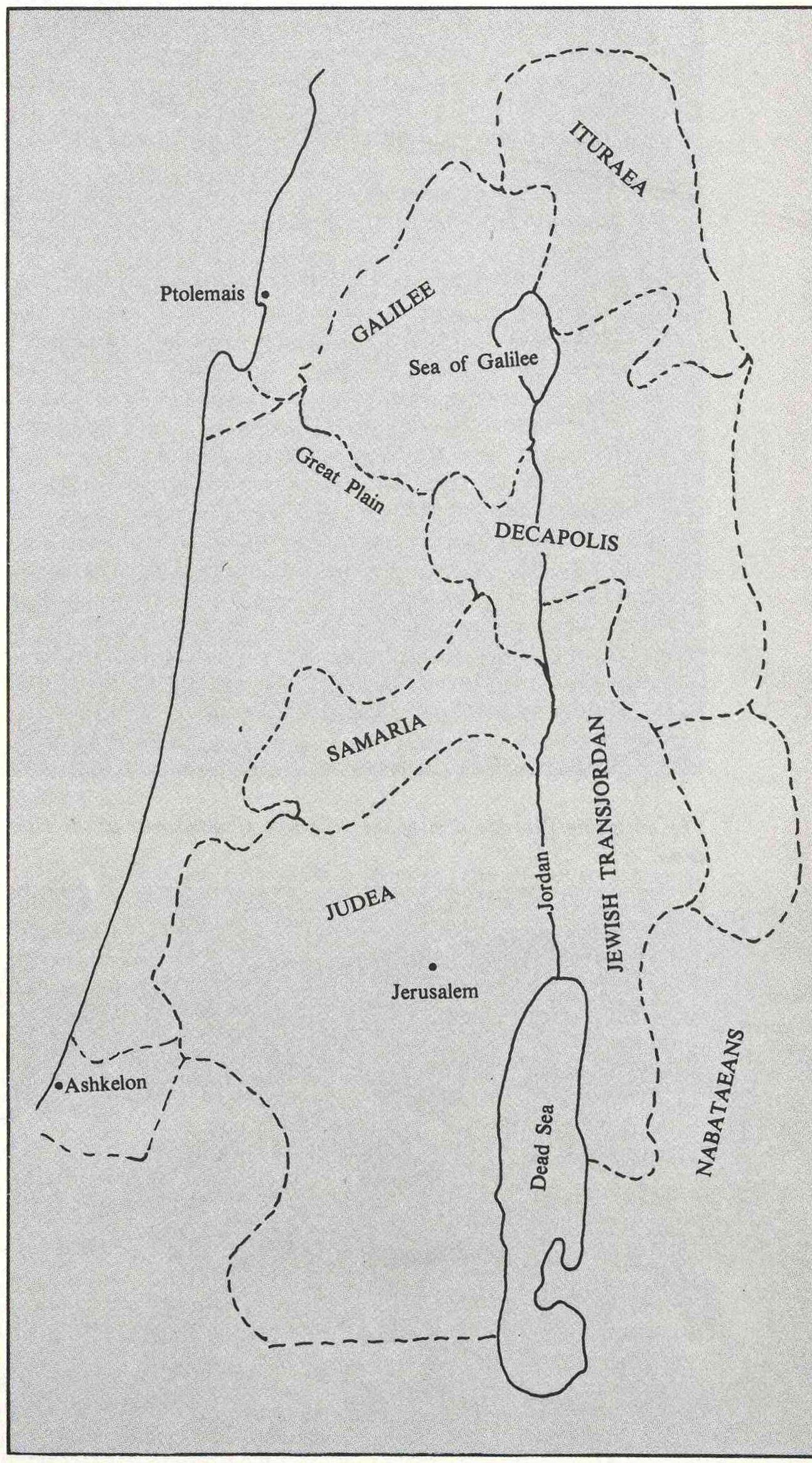
179[*a*] Crassus' behavior one year after the events of 56–55 BC once again roused discontent in Judaea. The calm before the Judaean storm did not last long.

179[*b*] He died in 53 BC.

180[*c*] Tarichaeae, also known as Migdal Nunaya in Talmudic sources, meaning the "Migdal of fishes," and as Magdala in the New Testament (Mark 16, 1; Luke 8, 2), was the most important town and a prosperous fishing center on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was famous for its salted fish, hence its Greek name Tarichaeae. The Galileans were known for their hatred of the Romans, who were supported by the Jew-hating gentile population living in the Galilee border towns. Rivalry and overcrowding went hand-in-hand with the hunger for land and riots. This may have had some bearing on the wholesale massacre perpetrated by Cassius.

180[*d*] We do not hear of another uprising by Alexander, son of Aristobulus (see 167[*a*]), but Peitholaus, who had first served Hyrcanus in Jerusalem, defected to the opposition when Aristobulus returned to Judaea. Peitholaus was defeated and executed by Gaius Cassius Longinus, who succeeded Crassus.

The provinces of Judaea in Hasmonean times



181[*a*] *Antipater's policy* According to A. Schalit, *Herod the King*, pp. 28–29, Antipater consistently opposed Hasmonean expansionism, thus avoiding constant conflicts with Hellenistic districts on the outskirts of Judaea. The corollary to this attitude was the search for a mode of peaceful coexistence with Rome that could best serve Jewish interests. As a pragmatist, he was consistent in his efforts to apply this policy of appeasement. In general, this trend was also followed by his son Herod, with significant variants of power politics, as noted in subsequent chapters. Appeasement of all-powerful Rome dominated his endeavors in the years 59–54 BC. Yet all his efforts to maintain peace in Judaea were shattered for a time by the dramatic events of 49 BC, as explained further on.

182[*b*] No such sequel is found in Josephus' later writings, though he may have wished to go into further details on this phase of the Parthian war with Rome.

183[*a*] *Judaea in the war between Caesar and Pompey* At this point Judaean history interlocks with that of Rome itself—Caesar's conflict with Pompey, and the latter's defeat at Pharsalus in Thessaly and flight to Egypt with Caesar in pursuit. These are generally known to the reader, and Josephus skillfully conveys the contemporary Judaeo-Roman relationship. This picture provides us with both the Roman and Jewish aspects of the current problems. Aristobulus, who had been released from prison in Rome, considered himself Julius Caesar's natural ally. But he was poisoned by Pompey's friends because they knew that Caesar would use him to capture the Roman-Syrian province, which Pompey opposed.

184[*b*] The royal tombs are those of the Hasmoneans near their native town of Modi'in. The authenticity of these Hasmonean tombs has been discussed earlier.

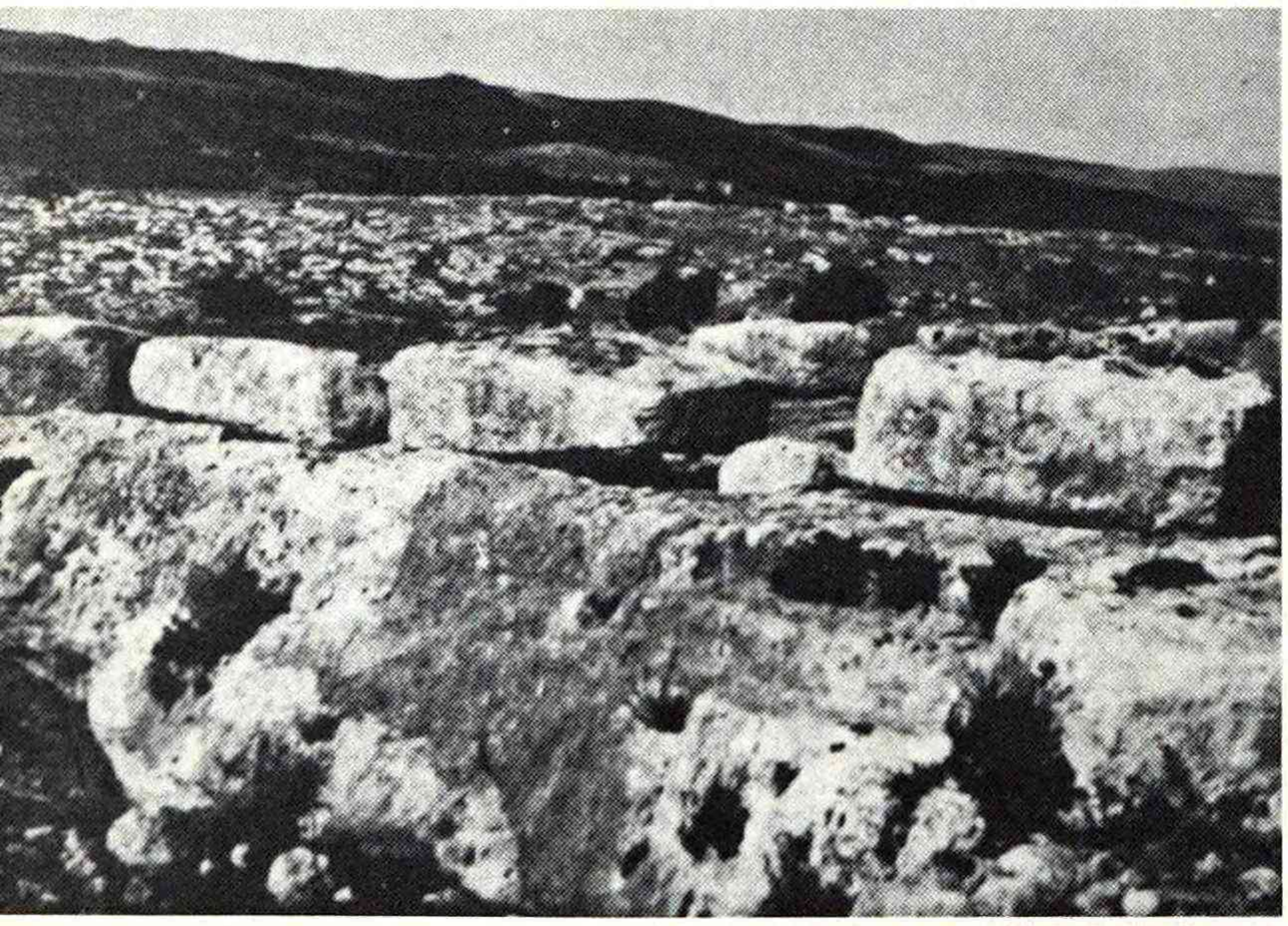
185[*a*] Pompey sent orders to execute Alexander to prevent a possible uprising in Judaea in favor of Julius Caesar. The executioner was Quintus Metellus Scipio, Pompey's father-in-law and the Syrian proconsul in the years 49–48 BC.

185[*b*] Son of Sohemus (*Antiq.* XIV, 129) and not of Mennaeus.

187[*a*] *Caesar's triumph; Antipater's cooperation* The battle of Pharsalus took place on August 9, 48 BC and Pompey was murdered on the Egyptian shore on September 28th. A faithful echo of how the Jews felt about his death exists in the contemporary apocryphal "Psalms of Solomon" (II 30–37) which proclaims God's punishment of Israel's arrogant enemies. The Pharisee author sees the hand of God in Pompey's death. For him it provided the truth that God is a great and righteous King who judges all under the heavens. In any case, Antipater, true to his appeasement policy, came over to Caesar's side, joined by Hyrcanus; Antipater was useful as a military leader at a time that Caesar was involved, together with Mithridates of Pergamum, with the campaign in Alexandria.

187[*b*] Mithridates was not permitted to cross over to Egypt at the

The navigable Pelusiac arm of the Nile was situated east of the Nile delta



Antipater's appeasement policy and his children

(181) Antipater had married an aristocratic lady named Cypros, who bore him four sons—Phasael, Herod, the future king, Joseph, Pheroras, and a daughter Salome. He had won influential support in all quarters by his hospitality and kindness. Above all, by his marriage he had made the Arabs king his friend; when he undertook the war against Aristobulus he sent his children to the king for safekeeping [*a*]. (182) When Cassius finally forced Alexander to give a written undertaking to keep the peace, he returned to the Euphrates to prevent a Parthian crossing. A fuller account will be given elsewhere [*b*].

Chapter IX

1. The triumph of Julius Caesar and the deaths of Aristobulus and Alexander

(183) When Pompey and the Senate fled across the Ionian Sea, Caesar became master of Rome and the Empire [*a*]. He released Aristobulus from prison, put legions at his disposal, and sent him posthaste to Syria in the hope that he would bring that province and Judaea with the surrounding country over to his side. (184) But malice frustrated both the enthusiasm of Aristobulus and the hopes of Caesar; Aristobulus was poisoned by Pompey's friends, and it was a long time before the king was even given burial in his native land. The body lay preserved in honey till Antony delivered it to the Jews for burial in the royal tombs [*b*].

2. (185) His son Alexander, after being tried for the damage he caused the Romans, also perished [*a*], beheaded by Scipio at Antioch on Pompey's orders. Alexander's brothers and sisters were taken under the roof of Ptolemy, son of Mennaeus [*b*] and ruler of Chalcis in the Lebanon, who sent his son Philippion to fetch them from Ascalon. (186) Philippion succeeded in tearing away Antigonus and his sisters from the arms of Aristobulus' widow, and escorted them to his father. The young man fell in love with the younger sister and married her, only to be killed on her account by his father, who after murdering his son, married Alexandra himself! As a result of this marriage, Ptolemy became even more protective of his wife's brother and sister.

3. Antipater's change of allegiance

(187) With Pompey's death [*a*] Antipater changed sides and courted Caesar. When Mithridates of Pergamum was forbidden to pass the Pelusiac Nile with the army he was leading to Egypt, and was held up at Ascalon [*b*], it was Antipater who persuaded the Arabs to lend their assistance, while he himself arrived with three thousand Jewish infantry. (188) He ensured for Mithridates the support of two influential Syrians: Ptolemy, a native of Lebanon, and

Jamblicus, both of whom easily induced their towns to join the war willingly. (189) Encouraged by the reinforcements brought by Antipater, Mithridates pushed on to Pelusium. Finding the way blocked, he besieged the town. Once again Antipater distinguished himself by breaking through the confronting wall, being the first to charge into the place at the head of his troops.

4. (190) After the capture of Pelusium the advance was again barred by the Egyptian Jews who occupied the district named after Onias [*a*]. Nevertheless, Antipater persuaded them to refrain from opposing the army, and even to furnish supplies. Thus, no further resistance was encountered even at Memphis, whose people volunteered to help Mithridates. (191) Having rounded the Delta, he fought the rest of the Egyptians at a place called Jews' Camp. When in the course of the engagement his entire right wing was endangered, Antipater came to the rescue. After routing his opponents on the left, where he was in command, he wheeled around and came to Mithridates' rescue along the river bank. (192) Falling on Mithridates' pursuers, he killed a large number of them and pursued the survivors so far that he even captured their camp. He lost only eighty of his men, while Mithridates lost about eight hundred in the rout. Saved beyond all expectation, Mithridates bore to Caesar's ears wholehearted testimony of Antipater's achievements.

5. Antipater honored by Caesar

(193) The praise bestowed by Caesar on Antipater [*a*] and the hopes it aroused spurred the latter to further hazards on Caesar's behalf. In all engagements he proved himself as the most intrepid of fighters, and because he was often wounded, he bore the marks of his valor on almost every part of his body. (194) After Caesar had restored order in Egypt and returned to Syria, he made Antipater an enviable person by bestowing on him the privilege of Roman citizenship, with exemption from taxes, and other honors and marks of friendship. Furthermore, it was for his sake that Caesar confirmed the appointment of Hyrcanus as high priest [*b*].

Julius Caesar

Pelusiac arm of the Nile, which formed the political frontier with Sinai and southern Palestine. He had been given notice of this refusal before leaving Ascalon on his way to Egypt (see map). The town of Pelusium lay close to the Mediterranean shore at the head of the eastern (Pelusiac) branch of the Nile. Antipater joined Mithridates and showed the Jewish frontier mercenaries in the service of Egypt letters from the high priest Hyrcanus enjoining the Jews of Egypt to join Caesar's cause; thereupon the soldiers let Mithridates cross over the Pelusiac Nile. These mercenaries were not "Nabataean" as mentioned by Josephus, but they were familiar figures in the region.

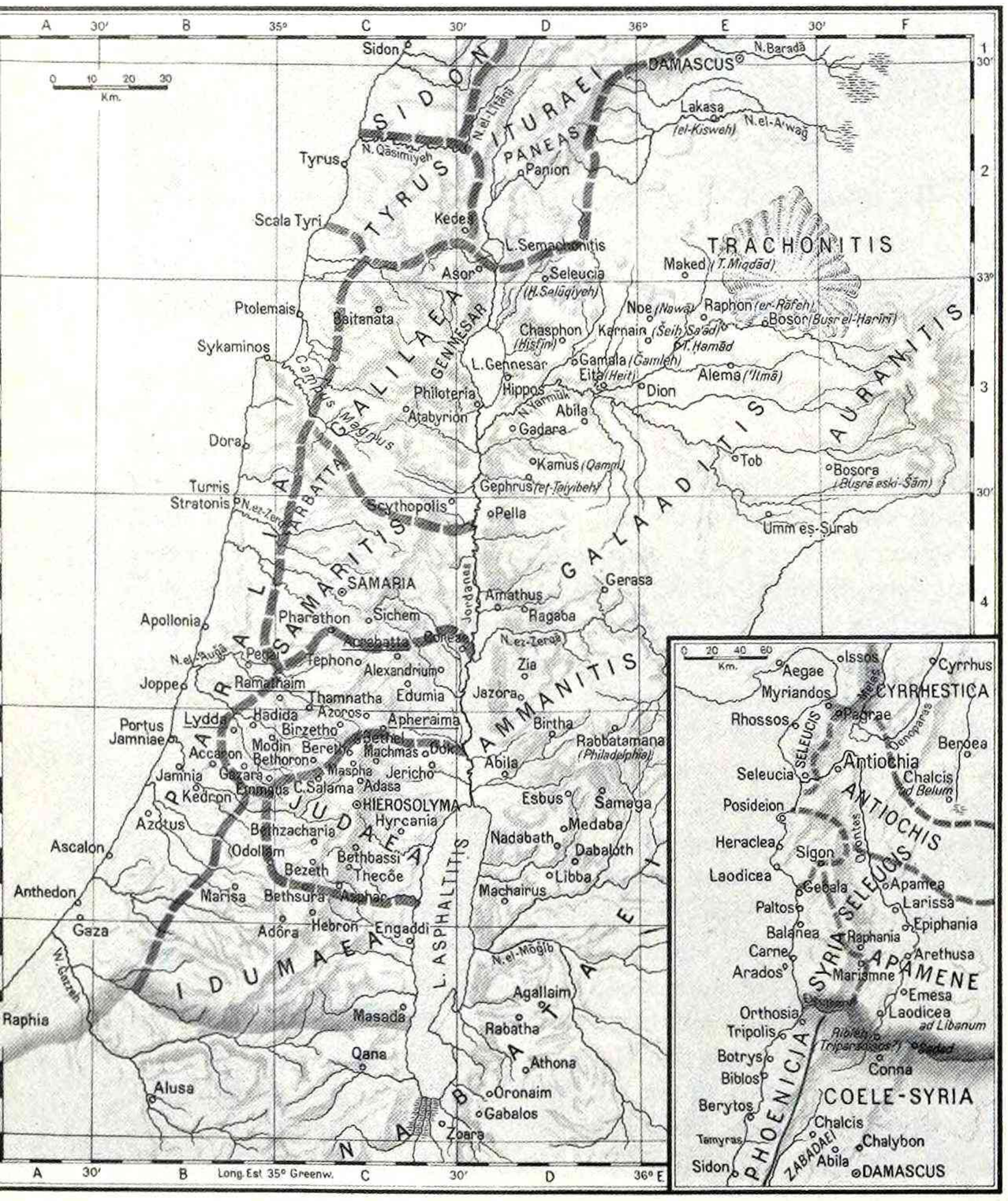
190[*a*] The district northeast of Memphis, where the former high priest Onias had established a military colony and built his temple in early Hellenistic times (see 33[*h*]). There were Jewish villages in the vicinity, probably the *Castra Judaeorum* mentioned in later Roman sources as fighting units.

193[*a*] The Romans honored their loyal allies, such as Antipater and his son Herod, by bestowing on them the title of *socius et amicus populi Romani* (ally and friend of the Roman people).

194[*b*] *Julius Caesar's attitude to Hyrcanus and Antipater* It may be gathered from Julius Caesar's attitude, in contrast to the attitudes of Pompey and Gabinius to the Hasmonean princes (as noted earlier), that the relations between the Palestinian Jews and the Roman conquerors could have been friendlier. Josephus relates that in 49 BC. Caesar ordered two legions to be put at Aristobulus' disposal to enable him to conquer Judaea and Syria for him (see 183[*a*]). In any case, Caesar restored Hyrcanus II as *ethnarch* (ruler of the people) and endowed him with the high priesthood. In addition, he enlarged the territory of Judaea by restoring Joppa, parts of the coastal plain, the Valley of Jezreel north of Samaria, and the lands of the kings of Phoenicia that the Hasmoneans had formerly reconquered from the Seleucid kings. With the disintegration of their kingdom these lands were confiscated by Pompey as Roman property. When Caesar awarded them to Hyrcanus, he was actually returning his ancestral inheritance. As high priest, Hyrcanus also obtained Caesar's promise to extend protection to the ancient Jewish communities in Alexandria and other parts of the Mediterranean Diaspora. *Antiq.* XIV, 188 records that Caesar is said to have expressly inscribed on bronze tablets that all the Jews of Alexandria were "Alexandrians" with all inherent rights. Meanwhile, real power was vested in the hands of the wily Antipater, acting as Hyrcanus' chief executive (see 199).

195[a] See 185[a], death of Alexander.
198[a] This was meant to present the protection provided by Rome in an unfavorable light.
199[b] This title is confirmed in *Antiquities* XIV, 143. Due to the decline in political power vested in the high priest, Antipater's authority as procurator or *epitropos* exceeded that of the high priest in all matters other than religious or internal communal affairs. The title of "viceroy" (instead of procurator), as used in recent translations, is misleading in the light of contemporary Roman procedure. Hyrcanus II was confirmed as high priest and ethnarch.
201[a] The northern wall (see 145[a]) and other ramparts.

Judaea Samaria and Galilee in 40–38 BC



C. THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN ANTIGONUS AND HEROD

Chapter X

1. The Antigonus-Antipater rivalry

(195) About this time Antigonus, son of Aristobulus, waited to plead his cause before Caesar, but contrary to his intentions, he only helped to further promote Antipater's cause. Antigonus should have confined himself to an expression of grief over the fate of his father, believed to have been poisoned because of his differences with Pompey, and to complaints against Scipio's treatment of his brother [*a*] without mixing his appeals for sympathy with an outburst of jealousy. (196) Moreover, he proceeded to accuse Hyrcanus and Antipater, claiming that they had illegally banished him, his brothers and sisters from their home; that in their insolence, they had treated the nation outrageously; that they had sent assistance to Egypt, not from any goodwill for Caesar, but from fear of the consequences of old quarrels, and in the hope that the memory of their friendship for Pompey would be forgotten.

2. (197) Antipater's retort was to throw off his clothes and expose his numerous scars. He needed no words to express his loyalty to Caesar, his body cried it aloud even if he would remain mute. (198) But Antigonus' effrontery astonished him: here was the son of an enemy of the Romans and a fugitive from Rome; a man who had inherited his father's rebellious and violent ways; yet he presumed to accuse others before the Roman general, and to try to obtain favors while he ought to deem himself lucky to be alive. Indeed (said Antipater), his desire for power did not stem from want, but rather he intended to use such power to stir up the Jews and to use his resources against those who had supported him [*a*].

3. Caesar's support and promotion of Antipater

(199) Having heard both sides, Caesar declared Hyrcanus worthy of the high priesthood and allowed Antipater his choice of office. Antipater left the privilege of determining the measure of honor to the bestower of the distinction and was accordingly appointed as procurator over all Judaea [*b*]. He was also authorized to rebuild Jerusalem's demolished walls. (200) Caesar ordered these honors to be engraved in the Capitol to commemorate his justice and Antipater's valor.

4. Antipater, procurator over Judaea

(201) After escorting Caesar across Syria, Antipater returned to Judaea. He began by rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem [*a*] that had been damaged by Pompey. He then proceeded to tour the country to quell local disturbances, combining threats and advice. He as-

sured the people that their support of Hyrcanus would ensure them a tranquil and prosperous existence, the enjoyment of their own property and peace; (202) but if they put their faith in the vain expectations of persons who preferred revolution for personal profit, they would find in him nót a protector but a dictator, in Hyrcanus not a king but a tyrant, and in the Romans and Caesar not leaders and friends but enemies, for they would not tolerate the removal from office of the man they had themselves appointed. (203) While he talked this way, he was organizing the administration of the country along his own lines, for he realized that Hyrcanus was too lazy and lacked the decisiveness required of a ruler [*b*]. He appointed his eldest son Phasael as governor of Jerusalem and the surrounding district: his next son Herod, though he was still quite young [*c*], he appointed to govern Galilee.

5. Herod's first exploits in Galilee; the execution of Ezekias

(204) The energetic Herod immediately found ample scope for his active spirit. Finding that a brigand chief named Ezekias [*a*] was ravaging the district bordering on Syria at the head of a large band, he caught him and put him and many of his companions to death. (205) This won Herod the gratitude of the Syrians. They sang his praise in all the villages and towns as the man who had restored their peace and possessions [*b*]. Through his exploits he became known to Sextus Caesar, kinsman of the great Caesar and governor of Syria. (206) This reputation also served to rouse a spirit of rivalry in his brother Phasael, who steadily became more popular in Jerusalem by keeping the city well in hand without any tactless misuse of power. (207) This is why Antipater was treated as a king by the nation, and honored by all as the lord of the realm. Notwithstanding this, his loyalty and faithfulness to Hyrcanus remained unchanged.

6. Rivalry between Hyrcanus and Herod's family

(208) But envy of prosperity cannot be avoided, and jealousy nagged secretly at Hyrcanus as he heard of the young people's growing fame. He was more particularly annoyed by Herod's successes and the news

203[*b*] Namely, to rule as *ethnarch,* not as king (see 199[*b*]).

203[*c*] *Young Herod in Galilee* Born in 73 BC, he was twenty-three years old when he was put in charge of Galilee. At this stage Antipater did not dream of eventually inheriting the royal prerogatives and national prestige of the defunct Hasmonean dynasty. Hallowed traditions, and the fact that he was an Idumaean proselyte and not of ethnic Jewish descent or royal lineage, precluded this. He was not motivated by dynastic ambitions, but mainly by considerations of national security and welfare, adapted to Roman policies. Nevertheless, other and more pressing reasons of internal security dictated Herod's appointment over Galilee. The district had always been pro-Hasmonean and grateful to its former charismatic leaders, among them Alexander Jannaeus, who liberated the Jewish peasantry and burghers from Hellenistic encroachments (see 204[*a*] and 205[*b*]).

204[*a*] *The significance of the Ezekias uprising* The term "brigands" used by Josephus refers to all those who challenged Roman rule in Judaea. He made use of the terminology in his non-Jewish sources, in which rebels were regarded as robbers of the peaceful inhabitants who did not defy Rome. But this literary device could hardly reflect the stark underlying economic and political issues. A comprehensive view of events may be gained from the more detailed description in Josephus' later *Antiquities of the Jews,* Book XIV, 163. The historian relates in detail the rapid decline of Hasmonean rule and the rise of Antipater, the commissioner for Judaea, and his son Herod. "But when the leading Jews saw Antipater and his sons growing so great through the goodwill of the nation and the revenues which they received from Judaea and (King) Hyrcanus' wealth, they became hostile toward him... The Jews were in great fear when they saw how powerful and reckless Herod was and how much he desired to become a dictator. And so they came to Hyrcanus and openly accused Antipater saying... for no longer are Antipater and his sons merely your stewards in the government;... they are openly acknowledged to be masters. Thus, Herod, his son, had killed Ezekias and his men in violation of our law that forbids us to slay a man, even an evildoer, unless he has first been condemned by the Sanhedrin (the national tribunal whose jurisdiction included criminal offenses) to suffer his just fate. He, however, has dared to do this without authority (of the Sanhedrin, which had the right to try cases of capital punishment)." Herod was hailed before the tribunal and almost condemned to death; but he escaped punishment because of Roman intervention (see 211[*a*]). On the other hand, we learn from another source that the Sanhedrin did not consider Ezekias an evildoer, but a "righteous man," as may be gathered from a text of *Kohelet Rabba* 1:11, because he fought a cause "of which the elders of Israel approved." Thus, each of the two Jewish sources portrays him in a different light. This difference is not only significant insofar as it reflects pro- and anti-Roman sympathies, but it is germane to the attitude of the governed masses and that of the men in power at the time. It also helps explain the gradual growth of peasant rebellion in Galilee. Furthermore, the Sanhedrin's objection was provoked because high Roman officials challenged its authority. The subsequent history of Judaea bore this out, as will be seen.

205[*b*] *What caused the rebellions in Galilee?* Studies in the past decade, referred to by A. Schalit, H. Kreissig and S. Appelbaum, on the agrarian and economic situation in Galilee and Judaea, from the beginning of the first century BC to the eve of the rebellion in AD 66, place new emphasis on the hitherto forgotten problem of overpopulation, and the restriction of the average peasant's land holdings in Galilee. (See S. Appelbaum, *Eretz-Israel,* p. 125). These vital factors, common everywhere, could not possibly fail to have an adverse effect on the rural masses of the thickly populated Galilee, as described by Josephus in *War* III, 42–44. From note 166[*a*], it will be seen that the districts bordering on the smaller Judaea of former days had been populated by non-Jewish "colonists"; and that the return of Jewish peasants there would end in overpopulating Galilee, among other districts, lead to constant tension, and add to the mutual hatred of Jews and gentiles. It is not known whether this situation is relevant to the uprising in Tarichaeae (180) that was suppressed by Crassus. However, a careful reading of ancient texts indicates that Galilee had reached a saturation point where many peasants could no longer retain their independence as farmers, and by force of circumstance and local custom, had to join the swelling ranks of the serfs, and the impoverished, poorly paid agricultural laborers. This depressed the general standard of living to the barest minimum, produced malnutrition, and worst of all, exposed the peasants to the rapacity of labor contractors and tax collectors. While Josephus throws no further light on the population explosion, in the Ezekias episode—described in *Antiquities*—he does refer to the background of the succeeding rebellions in Galilee, even though he did not grasp its fuller social implications. We shall see in *War* II, 56, that Ezekias' son, Judas the Galilean, led another peasant rebellion in Galilee, and that he was the leader of the revolutionary Zealot movement, as recorded in *Antiquities* XVIII, 23–25. We will see that the Ezekias episode throws a long shadow on events ranging over more than a century and a half of revolution, from 47 BC to Bar Kochba's days (AD 135). Moreover, this Galilean background is not without significance for the conditions prevailing in the Galilee of Jesus of Nazareth.

209[*a*] Capital crimes had to be tried before the great Sanhedrin and the high priest, and this procedure was also sanctioned by Roman law. In former decades, the highest authority had been the traditional "Council of Elders" and later the *Hever Hayehudim* or "Congregration of the Jews," which from the days of Hyrcanus became the Assembly of the Sanhedrin (this is its name in the New Testament). Though its prestige had been challenged by the Romans when they deposed the Hasmonean princes, its traditional authority was restored by Julius Caesar, as noted. *Antiquities* XIV, 165 adds that Herod had no choice but to respect the Sanhedrin's summons. On the other hand, he felt secure in Sextus Caesar's political backing.

211[*b*] *The story of Herod's trial* The account in *Antiquities* XIV, 163–177 differs considerably from that in *War* I, 208–211, which is rather confused. The facts, as summed up by A. Schalit, *Herod the King,* p. 33, are that Sextus Caesar, the legate of Syria, exceeded his authority by compelling Hyrcanus to free or absolve Herod, encouraging him to defy the Sanhedrin. Herod flaunted his contempt by dramatizing his appearance before the august tribunal dressed in a purple robe, with his hair styled in the grand Hellenistic manner, and surrounded by his bodyguard, instead of being clothed in black as would befit a person appearing on a criminal charge. Herod's aim was to impress upon his judges that he was a protégé of the Syrian governor over whom the Sanhedrin had no authority, and should they act otherwise, he would defend himself by force of arms. The court kept silent, except for Rabbi Shammai (an important figure in Talmudic literature and a contemporary of the illustrious Rabbi Hillel) who rebuked his peers into resuming the proceedings and sentencing Herod in accordance with the law. However, Hyrcanus the high priest sensed the danger and, remembering Sextus' compelling directive, postponed the proceedings and advised Herod to escape. According to A Schalit, this is closer to the truth.

213[*c*] Herod, who had to relinquish the governorship of Galilee, was instead appointed as *strategos* (military governor) in Coele-Syria, north of Galilee, for a bribe.

216[*a*] *Julius Caesar in Syria* Late in 47 BC Caesar set out for Africa to fight the partisans of Pompey who had gathered there, but he met with the most serious difficulties. One of Pompey's partisans was Quintus Caecilius Bassus who occupied Apamaea in central Syria. He retreated behind its walls, while Julius Caesar's army, assisted by Antipater, besieged him.

217[*b*] Vetus, the former commander who had besieged Bassus in Apamaea, was replaced by Marcus. His successor made no serious impact on the prolonged siege, but the indecisive situation came to an abrupt end when Julius Caesar was murdered (see 219[*b*]).

218[*a*] The murder occurred on the fifteenth of March, 44 BC.

219[*b*] *Cassius' harsh rule in Syria* Julius Caesar's assassination

Ruins of western city gate of Samaria (Sabastia)

of his honors brought by successive messengers. He was also annoyed by the numerous slanderers at court who resented the moderate actions of Antipater and his sons. (209) Hyrcanus, they said, had allowed Antipater and his family to take over the management of public affairs, while he was content with his tenure as high priest, which did not entitle him to exercise kingly powers and prerogatives. How long would he persist in being so foolish as to rear kings, to his own detriment? They had already ceased to pretend that they recognized his sovereignty, but acted openly as rulers, thrusting him aside. Herod had already executed a large number of his enemies without Hyrcanus' oral or written authorization, and in flagrant violation of Jewish law. If he were still a common citizen and not a ruler, he should appear in court [*a*] and answer for his conduct to his king and to the traditional laws, which forbade execution without trial.

7. Herod tried and acquitted

(210) The heated debate gradually inflamed Hyrcanus, and he finally summoned Herod to stand trial. Herod posted garrisons throughout Galilee and went to Jerusalem on his father's advice, confident of his ability to win out. He was accompanied by a strong escort, calculated on the one hand to remove any suspicion of à plan to dethrone Hyrcanus by force of arms, and on the other hand, to avoid being unprotected against those who resented him. (211) But Sextus Caesar, fearing that the young man might be isolated by his enemies and meet with misfortune, expressly ordered Hyrcanus to clear Herod of the manslaughter charge. Hyrcanus, preferring this course because he liked Herod, acquitted him [*b*].

8. (212) Suspecting that his escape did not meet with the king's wish, Herod withdrew to Sextus in Damascus, prepared to avoid complying with a second summons. The courtiers in Jerusalem renewed their incitement of Hyrcanus, maintaining that Herod had departed in anger and was prepared to attack him. The king also thought that to be the case, but being aware of his opponent's strength, did not know what to do. (213) But when Sextus Caesar appointed Herod governor of Coele-Syria and Samaria [*c*], Hyrcanus was paralyzed with fear, both because of the forces at his disposal and his popularity, expecting Herod to march upon him at any moment.

9. Herod's retaliation forestalled

(214) The king had surmised correctly, for Herod, furious at the threat implied by his trial, collected an army and set out to Jerusalem to dethrone Hyrcanus. He would have achieved his plan had not his father and brother hurried to meet him and calm him down. They urged him to content himself with threats and intimidations, and to spare the king under whom he had acquired so much power. If he felt angry at being

forced to stand trial, he should be thankful for the acquittal, and after facing the black prospect of a terrible sentence, should not be ungrateful for his escape. (215) Moreover, if it is true that in war God holds the balance, the injustice of his case would be outweighed by his military strength. He should not be too certain of ultimate success when he was on the point of waging war against his king and companion, often his benefactor, who had never been harsh with him except this time, when under the influence of malevolent advisors he had scared him with a mere menace of injury. Herod yielded to this advice, assuming that he had made his future secure by giving the nation an exhibition of his real power.

The war of Apamaea; murder of Sextus Caesar

(216) Meanwhile, the Romans had troubles at Apamaea and civil war broke out. Caecilius Bassus, in loyalty to Pompey, assassinated Sextus Caesar and took over his army. Caesar's other commanders, in revenge for the murder, attacked Bassus with all their forces [*a*]. (217) Antipater, for the sake of the dead Caesar and his surviving friends, sent them reinforcements under his sons. As the war dragged on, Murcus arrived from Italy to succeed Antistius Vetus [*b*].

Chapter XI

1. Murder of Julius Caesar and the civil war

(218) At this time, as a result of the treacherous assassination of Caesar by Cassius and Brutus, after he had ruled for three years and seven months [*a*], the great civil war broke out in the Roman Empire. The result was a tremendous upheaval, in which the leading men split up into different factions, each joining the party he thought would best serve his interests. Cassius for his part, went to Syria to command the forces centered around Apamaea. (219) There he reconciled Bassus and Murcus and the opposing legions, and brought the siege of Apamaea to an end. Then leading the troops, he went from town to town levying tribute and exacting sums greater than they were able to pay [*b*].

2. (220) The Jews were ordered to contribute seven hundred talents, and Antipater, frightened by Cassius' threats to expedite payment, distributed the collection among his sons and some of his acquaintances, including Malichus [*a*], one of his enemies, so urgent was the matter. (221) Herod was the first to satisfy Cassius with a quota of one hundred talents from Galilee, and thereby became one of his best friends. Cassius abused the rest for their slowness, and then vented his fury on the cities themselves. (222) Gophna, Emmaus and two less important towns were reduced to servitude [*b*]. He was on the point of executing Malichus [*c*] for his failure to levy the tribute at once, but Antipater prevented the execution and the destruction of the other cities by appeasing Cassius with a gift of a hundred talents.

brought the leaders of the plot against him to Syria where they hoped to raise an army to fight his successors. Marcus Brutus went to Macedonia; Gaius Cassius Longinus (see 180[*d*]) came to Syria and took over the province that Julius Caesar had promised him (but which was subsequently given to another commander). Suddenly Cassius found himself at the head of a large army and in urgent need of funds, which he levied from Syria and Judaea.

220[*a*] *Malichus* According to M. Stern, it would appear that his family came from the same Idumaean region as Antipas, Antipater and Herod (see 130[*e*]). He is mentioned in Josephus' text as one of Antipater's enemies. He challenged Antipater's influence in Judaea under Hyrcanus II (*Antiq.* XIV, 273–279). Stern conjectured this on the basis of the Arabic sounding name, as well as on the important part that Malichus' brother played in the south of Judaea, around Masada (*Antiq.* XIV, 296). The Malichus family, like that of Antipas, were apparently Idumaean converts to Judaism from the days of Hyrcanus I, and it is possible, according to B. Kanael, that this family had already competed with the Antipas family for a predominant sphere of influence even before its conversion. Malichus' failure to levy the tribute at once, aroused Cassius' anger and he would have executed him had not Antipater interceded on his behalf.

222[*b*] A constant crossing and sometimes fusion of different revolutionary currents resulted in a direct refusal to pay the extraordinary tribute levied by Cassius. This was checked by the wholesale enslavement of Lydda and Thamna, as well as Gophna and Emmaus in central Judaea, which had been Hasmonean strongholds since the days of the early rebellion. Antipater and his son Herod hastened to collect the money, thus winning Cassius' favor. But this raised serious misgivings in Hyrcanus' entourage. They feared for his position and influence in the administration of internal affairs in Judaea.

222[*c*] Malichus was apparently a devoted supporter of Hyrcanus II, and a leader of the clandestine opposition that could not tolerate the usurpation of power by Antipater, his son, and their clan. For this reason Josephus qualified him as "one of the enemies of Antipater." Malichus' failure to collect a tribute of one hundred talents (see 220–222) was intended to destroy Antipater's image in Roman eyes. To murder him would be the only way of salvaging what remained of Hasmonean rule and influence. Moreover, Cassius had just granted Herod increased authority by confirming him as strategos and collector of a large tribute due from Galilee. All these factors hastened the assault on Antipater's life.

Colonnade along the Herodian forum of Samaria

225[*a*] Young Caesar, called Octavian, became the future emperor Augustus.

226[*b*] *The assassination of Antipater* Paradoxically enough, as suggested by A Schalit, Antipater's death by poisoning at the hand of Malichus in 43 BC was a dreadful blow to the decadent Hasmoneans since, in accordance with his pro-Hyrcanus policy, Antipater would have backed Malichus' lawful successors to maintain the only acceptable modus vivendi between Roman overlordship and an intact Judaea. The sequel proved this to be true.

227[*a*] When the Hyrcanus supporters assassinated Antipater, they paved the way for the astounding historical developments that helped Herod to the Hasmonean throne under the aegis of Rome, and wiped out the last vestige of Hasmonean rule. The assassination was to trigger off a revolution in Jerusalem, as Malichus' friends were ready to support him if the Idumaeans retaliated. But Malichus did not act promptly and Hyrcanus was undecided, as he feared bloodshed in Jerusalem. Malichus then denied having had any part in Antipater's murder, while he hoped to strike at the first opportunity. But the Idumaean brothers were also planning to retaliate.

229[*a*] Throughout his rule, Herod endeavored to maintain close ties with the inhabitants of Samaria (later called Sebaste). He came to the city's aid even before his final victory over Antigonus.

229[*b*] The aliens were foreign auxiliaries.

229[*c*] Purification from contamination of any source, and this obviously included the presence of the abhorred pagan auxiliaries around the precincts close to the Temple area. Before entering this sacred area, the Jews purified themselves in a ritual *mikveh*. Many rock-cut *mikvehs* have been uncovered at the foot of the Temple Mount, as illustrated. Hyrcanus II therefore enjoined Herod not to bring alien soldiers to Jerusalem because the people were busily going about the purification rites for the festival (Acts 21, 24; John 11, 55).

230[*d*] The manner of revenge was dubbed the "Roman way," characterized by secret ambush and crime which defied subsequent investigation.

231[*a*] Laodicea (the present Syrian Lattakeih) was an important maritime center. Cassius had gone there early in 42 BC to join Brutus' armies. The "crowns" referred to were laurel wreaths awarded to citizens and leaders for distinguished service. The "propitious moment" sensed by Herod was when Cassius' attention would be distracted elsewhere, away from Judaean affairs.

231[*b*] Tyre, the famous Phoenician port and later Hellenistic metropolis, closely connected with Jewish Galilee, though it was populated mainly by gentiles.

232[*c*] Malichus' grand scheme (and miscalculation) is outlined in 226–228.

233[*a*] Tribunes were Roman officers in charge of a cohort. The assassination was perpetrated in Tyre.

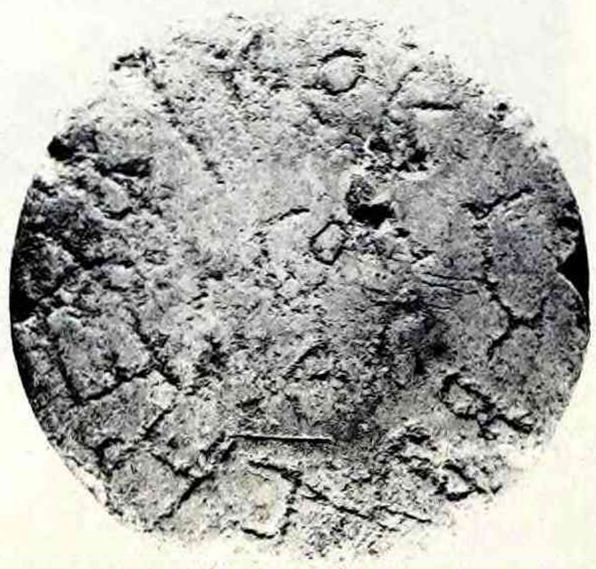
234[*b*] See 230.

236[*a*] After he left Syria in 42 BC to help Brutus attack Mark Antony and Octavius in the west. No outbreaks could have occurred in Jerusalem while Cassius remained in Syria.

238[*a*] Masada in its early stage was not the elaborate fastness which Herod rebuilt (see *War* IV 399–404).

Stone weight in the form of a round loaf dating to 9 BC and inscribed in Greek (with abbreviation)

"Year 32 of King Herod, the Benefactor Loyal to Caesar, Inspector of Markets." Three Minas (the Attica mina was equivalent to 436.6 grams). Herod's thirty-second year was 9 BC. The titles of "benefactor" and "loyal to Caesar," though unknown as applied to Herod, are common to this period



3. (223) However, after Cassius departed, Malichus, far from showing his gratitude to Antipater, devised a plot against the man who had so often saved his life, determined to remove this obstacle to his malpractices. Antipater, fearing the man's strength and cunning, crossed the Jordan to collect an army to crush the plot. (224) Although his plan was detected Malichus outwitted Antipater's sons Phasael, warden of Jerusalem, and Herod, custodian of the armory, by sheer impudence, cajoling them with excuses and oaths into interceding on his behalf, as mediators with their father. Malichus was thus saved a second time by Antipater who persuaded Murcus, the governor of Syria, to forgo his intended execution of Malichus as a revolutionary.

4. Antipater poisoned by Malichus

(225) When young Caesar [*a*] and Antony declared war on Cassius and Brutus, the latter levied an army in Syria. As they prized Herod's potential aid, they appointed him governor of Syria then and there, and put a force of horse and foot soldiers under his command; moreover, Cassius promised to make him king of Judaea when the war would be won. (226) The power and prospects enjoyed by the son paved the way to his father's destruction: for Malichus, alarmed by these latest developments, bribed the royal cupbearers to poison Antipater's drink. Antipater fell victim to Malichus' scheming and fell dead when he rose from the banquet [*b*]. Antipater had been a most able leader in public affairs, whose crowning achievement had been to place and maintain Hyrcanus on his throne.

5. Herod's avenging of his father

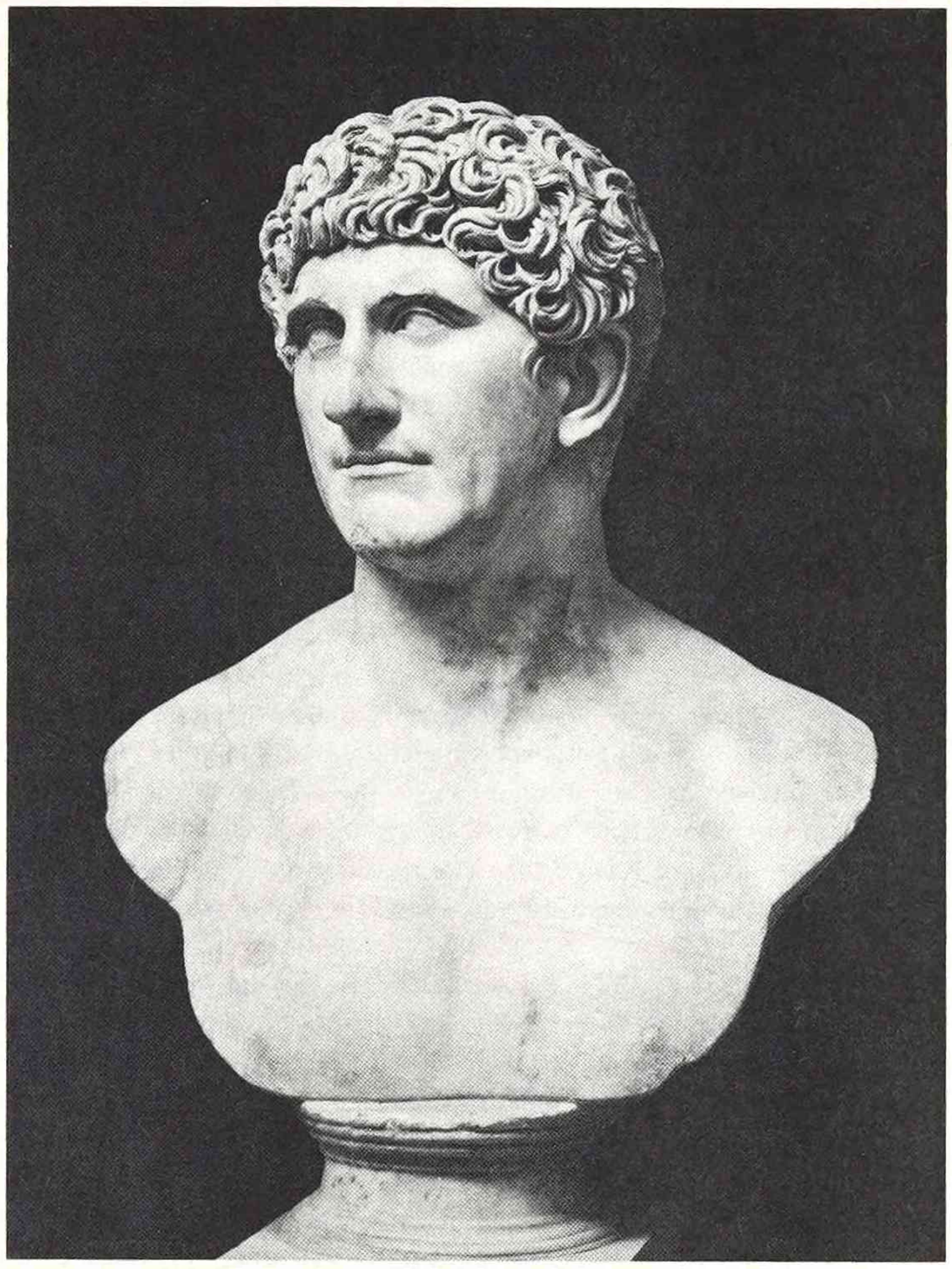
(227) When suspicion rested on him, Malichus [*a*] quieted the angry citizens by making a public denial and secured his position by raising a body of infantry. He assumed that Herod would not let the matter rest, and in fact the latter promptly appeared on the scene with an army to avenge his father. (228) His brother Phasael advised him not to settle accounts openly with the adversary for fear of provoking a popular riot; he accepted Malichus' denial momentarily, and agreed that no suspicion attached to him. He then performed the funeral rites for his father with great splendor.

6. (229) Herod went to Samaria which was rife with communal agitation [*a*], and after restoring order, he returned at the head of his troops to Jerusalem for a festival. Malichus, alarmed at his approach, prevailed on Hyrcanus to send Herod orders forbidding him to bring aliens [*b*] among the people during their purification [*c*]. Herod showed his contempt for the pretext and its source; he entered the city by night. (230) Malichus approached him again and bewailed Antipater's fate. Herod concealed his motives though he could hardly contain his anger; at the same time he sent a message deploring his father's murder to Cassius, who detested Malichus for other reasons. The former suggested that he revenge himself for his

father's murder and gave secret orders to his tribunes to help Herod perform a righteous deed [*d*].

7. (231) When Cassius captured Laodicea [*a*] and the notables of every district flocked there bearing gifts and crowns, Herod found this a propitious time for his revenge. Malichus was suspicious, and when he came to Tyre [*b*] where his son was being held hostage, he planned to spirit him out secretly: at the same time he was preparing to escape to Judaea. (232) His desperate situation incited him to more ambitious schemes of rebellion against Rome—(while Cassius had his hands full with the war against Antony)—and then deposing Hyrcanus without hindrance, eventually mounting the throne himself [*c*].

8. (233) But fate laughed at his hopes. Herod, perceiving this plan, invited both Hyrcanus and Malichus to dinner; he dispatched one of his servants to his home, as though to prepare the meal, but really to warn the tribunes [*a*] to carry out the ambush. (234) Remembering Cassius' orders [*b*], they made their way, sword in hand, to the shore facing the city, surrounded Malichus and stabbed him to death. Hyrcanus fainted from the shock; when he finally recovered consciousness he asked Herod who had murdered Malichus; (235) one of the tribunes answered "by Cassius' order". "Then," replied Hyrcanus, "Cassius has saved both me and my country by destroying a man who plotted against both." Whether he really thought so, or acquiesced from fear to an accomplished fact, remains unclear. Anyway, Herod thus avenged himself on Malichus.



Mark Antony

Chapter XII

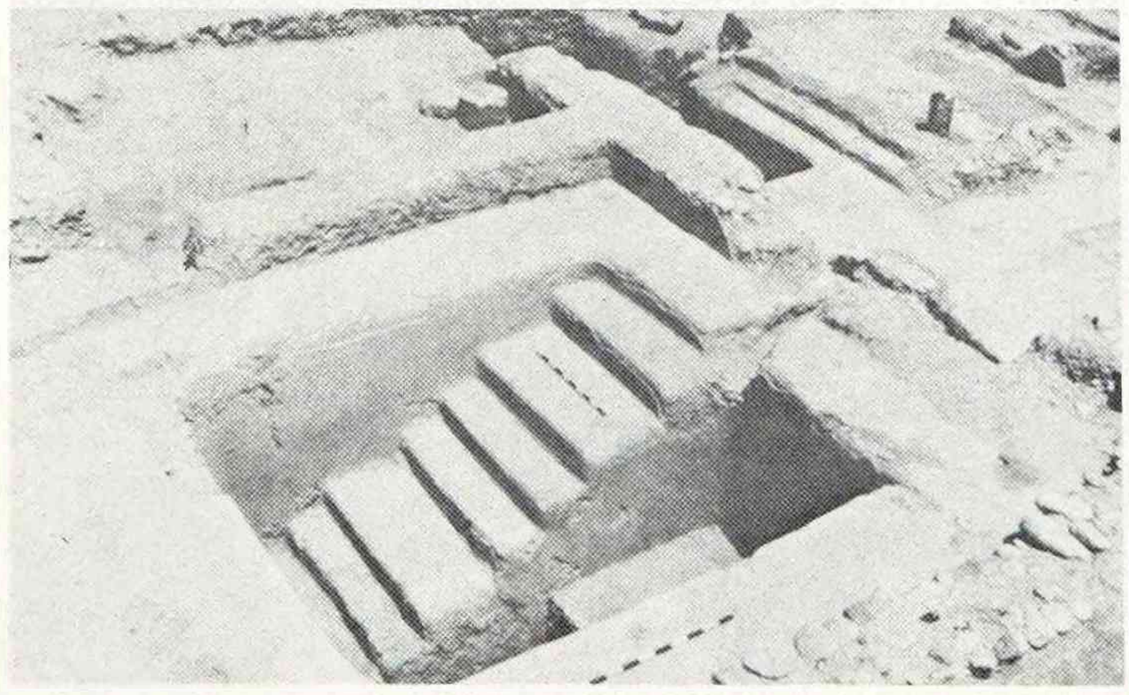
1. Revolt of Helix in Judaea

(236) When Cassius withdrew from Syria [*a*], a fresh outbreak followed in Jerusalem. Helix, backed by a body of soldiers, attacked Phasael in order to punish Herod through his brother to avenge Malichus. Herod was then with Fabius, the Roman general, at Damascus. Though he was anxious to help, he was detained by sickness. (237) Meanwhile, Phasael overpowered Helix without any assistance and blamed Hyrcanus for having collaborated with Helix and permitting Malichus' brother to seize the fortresses; he had seized many of these including Masada, the strongest of them all.

2. Herod's defeat of his adversaries

(238) But he was helpless against the might of Herod, who as soon as he recovered, recaptured all the forts and expelled Helix from Masada [*a*] as a suppliant. He also expelled Marion, the tyrant of Tyre, who was already master of three of the strongholds, from Galilee. He spared all Tyrians taken prisoner, even sending some away with gifts, thus ensuring himself the favor of the citizens, and arousing their hatred for the tyrant. (239) Marion had received his authority

A Hasmonean mikveh *(ritual bath) in their Jericho winter palace*



239[*b*] First appearance of Antigonus in Galilee.

239[*c*] His brother-in-law (see 186). This is how Josephus brings the story back full circle to Antigonus, the last Hasmonean pretender. The story of Antigonus is resumed in subsequent sections. His appearance in Galilee, and the threat it posed, convinced Hyrcanus and the sons of Antipater to renew their alliance. Consequently, when Herod returned to Jerusalem after expelling Antigonus from Galilee, he was decorated with a crown of leaves as he reentered Jerusalem.

241[*a*] *Why did Herod marry Mariamme?* Josephus admits that Herod's engagement to the princess culminated in unhappiness for him (see 431); but he apparently entered the engagement because of the prestige which the Hasmonean dynasty carried with it, and in order to enhance his own position. However, A. Schalit does not exclude the possibility that Herod married the beautiful Mariamme for love. (Schalit, *Herod the King*, p. 36.) Herod's choice brings to mind an older biblical episode, that of David's marriage to Michal, daughter of King Saul. Much as he feared and hated David, he encouraged him to become his son-in-law. (I Samuel 18, 20–26.) On the other hand, according to Schalit, the motives of Alexandra and Hyrcanus, Marriamme's mother and grandfather, seem to have been political and military, whatever Herod's motivations. They wanted to gain the support of the only man they believed could defend them from the burning vengeance of Antigonus. They did not realize that Herod, their noble defender, would eventually kill not only them, but also Mariamme and her children (see 438).

243[*b*] *Daphne* was situated on the western Syrian coast.

243[*c*] The true story of Antony and Cleopatra is largely lost in Roman annals. Josephus, on the other hand, has preserved some valuable data on Cleopatra (see 279[*d*]) which hints at something different than the traditional Roman and Shakespearean image of her (see 362[*c*]).

243[*d*] *Messala* Author, orator; a friend of Horace and Tibullus, and a respected public figure in the recent Roman civil wars, who went over to the side of Antony.

244[*e*] *Herod and Phasael confirmed as rulers of Judaea* The other Roman triumvirs, Octavian, Antony and Lepidus, the would-be restorers of the republic, prevailed over Cassius and Brutus at Philippi in 42 BC. This battle changed the destiny of the Roman world. In dividing the spoils, the East fell to Antony. The East, referred to as Asia, comprised Syria, Asia Minor, Judaea and Egypt. *Tetrarchs* were governors of a fourth part of a country, or subordinate rulers. Antony awarded the same title to both brothers with authority over the whole of Judaea; but the administrative function of the high priest continued to diminish as the brothers increasingly interfered in the business of government. It is clear that their appointment as tetrarchs set the seal on the rise of the Antipatrid dynasty.

from Cassius when the latter divided the whole of Syria into principalities. Through hatred for Herod he had brought back Antigonus [*b*], son of Aristobulus; he was encouraged by Fabius, whom Antigonus had induced by bribes to assist in his recall. All expenses were met by Ptolemy [*c*].

3. (240) Herod met and defeated these confederates in battle at the approaches to Judaea. After defeating and banishing Antigonus from the country, Herod returned to Jerusalem where he was now popular because of his victories. Even those who had hitherto disliked him, now received him warmly because of his marriage into the family of Hyrcanus. (241) His first wife had been a Jewess of good birth named Doris, who bore him a son, Antipater; but now he became betrothed to Mariamme, the daughter of Alexander, son of Aristobulus, and grand-daughter of Hyrcanus, thus becoming a kinsman of the king [*a*].

4. Mark Antony's promotion of Herod and Phasael

(242) When Cassius met his end at Philippi [*a*], Caesar returned to Italy and Mark Antony to Asia. Numerous states sent deputations to Antony in Bithynia, and among them came influential Jews to accuse Phasael and Herod of usurping the government, leaving Hyrcanus a mere figurehead. To counter this, Herod appeared and suborned Antony to refuse his adversaries a hearing, thus silencing them for the time being.

5. (243) Later, a hundred Jewish officials arrived at Daphne [*b*] near Antioch to appeal to Antony, now a slave to his passion for Cleopatra [*c*]. The most eminent and eloquent men among them came forward to accuse the two brothers. Messala [*d*] appeared for the defense, backed by Hyrcanus because of his marriage connection with Herod. (244) After listening to both sides he asked Hyrcanus which party was more fit to govern. Hyrcanus chose Herod and his followers, much to Antony's delight, because years before he had enjoyed a bountiful welcome by Herod's father when he had invaded Judaea under Gabinius. Thereupon, he appointed the two brothers as tetrarchs [*e*], entrusting to them the administration of all Judaea.

6. Antony's massacre of the Jewish deputies

(245) When the deputies voiced their resentment, Antony arrested fifteen of them, even intending to put them to death, and ignominiously dismissed the rest [*a*]. This created a great turmoil in Jerusalem. A second delegation, a thousand strong, was dispatched to

Coins of the Hasmonean period: *Hasmonean coinage is aniconic; the usual type of the small bronze coins shows on the obverse an inscription in the old Hebrew script "High priest and the Heber (Community) of the Jews"; and on the reverse the cornucopia. This is illustrated by a cache of some twenty coins dating to the time of Antigonus, which were found west of the swimming pool of the Hasmonean palace at Jericho. (See illustrations to paras. 407 and 408)*

Tyre [*b*], where Antony rested on his way to Jerusalem. To suppress the clamor of this party he ordered the governor of Tyre to chastise all those he caught, and to back up the authority of the tetrarchs he had appointed.

7. (246) Previously, Herod accompanied by Hyrcanus, had come out to the deputies on the shore and strongly urged them not to bring about their own destruction and war on their country by senseless strife. This only increased their resentment, whereupon Antony ordered out troops who killed and wounded many of them. Hyrcanus granted them burial rites and permitted care of the wounded. (247) But those who escaped did not remain silent, and the disturbance they created in the city so exasperated Antony that he executed the prisoners.

Chapter XIII

1. The Parthians' invasion of Syria

(248) Two years later Barzaphranes, the Parthian satrap serving under Pacorus, the king's son, overran Syria [*a*]. Lysanias, who had succeeded his father Ptolemy, son of Mennaeus [*b*], persuaded the satrap to restore Antigonus to power and to oust Hyrcanus by promising him a thousand talents and five hundred women [*c*]. (249) Pacorus, won over by these promises, followed the coastal road [*d*], and directed Barzaphranes to proceed through the interior. Of the coastal towns, Tyre would not admit Pacorus through its gates, while Sidon and Ptolemais [*e*] admitted him. He entrusted a detachment of cavalry to one of the royal cupbearers—who bore the same name as his—to proceed in advance into Judaea to reconnoitre the enemies' positions and give all necessary aid to Antigonus.

245[*a*] Antony backed Herod and his brother because he felt, as other Roman rulers had before him, that they would be more loyal and responsive to Roman interests than the liberty-loving Jews of Judaea. The Jews knew what heavy demands Antony's rule would entail in contrast with Julius Caesar's former liberality in Asia, and felt that his new tetrarchs, Herod and Phasael, would not hesitate to tax the people to the hilt to maintain Antony's army in Syria and his life of luxury with Cleopatra.

245[*b*] See illustration of Tyre, the ancient Phoenician-Hellenistic maritime center.

248[*a*] *The Parthian invasion and alliance with Antigonus* The Parthians knew they would be welcome in Syria and Judaea, and realized how much Antony was hated there.

248[*b*] See 186 and 239.

248[*c*] According to *Antiquities* XIV, 331 f., it was Antigonus himself who made such a promise to the Parthians (see 257). The women he promised were the families of his political opponents. Antigonus had given up hope of ever reaching a settlement with the Romans, and in appealing to the Parthians he committed himself to the prospect of a Parthian victory. He hardly realized that this would neutralize any ultimate attempt at coexistence with Roman power, and would only drive him into her enemy's camp. The Parthians jumped at the offer, since a Judaean ally or subject people would represent a strategic advantage in their struggle against Rome. Antigonus' plan succeeded; Judaea was conquered by Parthia. After disposing of Hyrcanus, Antigonus struck bilingual coins with "King Antigonus" in Greek and Hebrew, *"Mattathias the high priest, the Congregation of the Jews"* (see 357[*b*]). For more than a century the Jews regarded the Parthians with affection as saviors, for they had once delivered the people from Rome and her Idumaean friends.

249[*d*] Along the "Ladder of Tyre," a rocky promontory that separates the coast of Galilee from that of Phoenicia.

249[*e*] Ancient Ptolemais was formerly the Accho of pre-biblical and biblical times (today's Acco or Acre). Named after Ptolemy II it was the largest Hellenistic harbor city on the Palestinian coast, and after its conquest by Pompey it became an autonomous town. Various sections of its Hellenistic wall were discovered in 1974/5 at a depth of one and a half meters below the level of the modern town and along the modern highway north of Acre. The wall is three to five meters thick and runs from north to south. An interesting feature of the old fortifications is a large round tower, of which the lowest layers have remained, that formed part of a fortress facing the mainland. The few hundred meters separating the wall sections uncovered suggest the city's vast area. Some of the architectural features of these fortifications appear in the lowest layers of the later, but still extant "Tower of Flies" in the old harbor. Among the noteworthy finds of previous excavations are a Roman bath with plastered walls and floors, and a nearby pool. A glass furnace that was uncovered provides evidence of the glass industry for which Acre and the Phoenician coast were renowned. The furnace consisted of a container for the molten glass, built on rocks, coated on the inside with crude glass, and a rock-hewn fireplace, found at a depth of three meters. A small Hellenistic temple with a Greek inscription to Zeus Soter came to light. Nearby, sections of a barracks and an elephant bone were found, reminding us that these animals were used in Hellenistic warfare (see *War* I, 42b).

Cleopatra. Bust in the Capitoline museum, Rome. Her fame was not due so much for her beauty as for her craftiness

250[*a*] *Drymus* The large forest in the heavily wooded Plain of Sharon.(According to B. Mazar the term Sharon apparently means "forest." Evidently the uprising against Rome and their allies; the Antipater Idumaean clan controlling Judaea, had already spread throughout Judaea.)

251[*b*] *The market place* was situated along the Tyropoeon street that ran through the central vale of the city from north to south, close to the Temple Mount area. A northern suburb had grown around the Tyropoeon (see map of Jerusalem in Hasmonean times).

253[*a*] *Pentecost* was one of the occasions when tens of thousands of pilgrims flocked to the capital from every part of Judaea, Galilee and Transjordan. All were intent on driving the Idumaean ruling house from power.

254[*b*]. The King of Parthia's cupbearer, Pacorus, not the commander by that name.

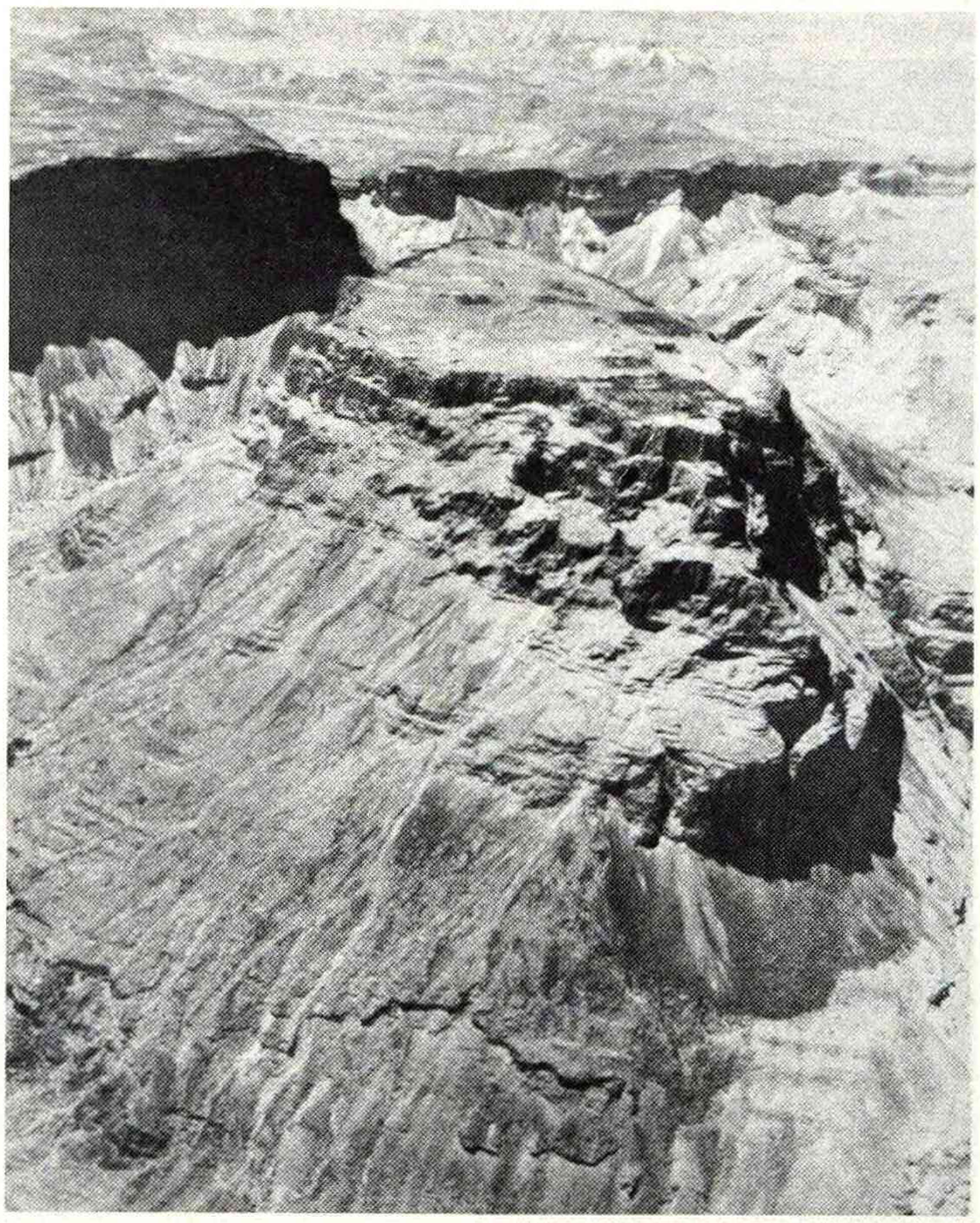
255[*c*]. *Freemen* Hyrcanus apparently went along to lend this mission a more formal aspect. *Antiquities* XIV, 342 specifies that the party left with two hundred cavalry and ten "freemen," i.e., not slaves, as were most Parthian soldiers. Hyrcanus and Phasael agreed to leave the besieged city because the negotiations were formally to be conducted by the Parthian envoy and not by Antigonus (who had probably agreed to such a strategem). Like Phasael, he may have believed that their only chance lay in negotiating with the Parthians, rather than resisting their enemies who grew stronger every day. But Herod's warnings were in vain. Phasael and Hyrcanus set off on their fateful journey to Barzapharnes in Galilee.

256[*a*] The satrap, Barzapharnes, meant to gain time until he would hear of Herod's capture in Judaea, after which he would come out in the open.

257[*b*] *Ecdippon*—modern Achzib (Ez-Zib in Arabic) north of Acre (Acco). Phasael's suspicion of the satrap's secret intentions was verified by what he heard from a Syrian.

257[*c*] See 248.

The stronghold of Masada, seen from the north, was practically inaccessible to strangers



2. Pacorus' attack on Jerusalem

(250) As the Parthian cavalry raided Carmel, Jews flocked to Antigonus in large numbers, eager to take part in the invasion. These he sent forward with orders to capture the place called Drymus [*a*]. Here they clashed with the enemy, drove him back and rushed in pursuit to Jerusalem; advancing with strong support, they reached the palace. (251) Hyrcanus and Phasael met them with a large force and the battle raged in the market place [*b*]. Herod's men put the enemy troops to flight, shut them in the Temple area, and posted sixty men in adjoining houses to stand guard over them. The populace, in league against the brothers, attacked the men garrisoned there and burned them to death. (252) Enraged by these losses, Herod attacked the citizens, killing many of them. Day after day they sallied forth against each other in small groups, and the bloodshed continued without pause.

3. (253) By the time the feast of Pentecost [*a*] came around, the vicinity of the Temple area and the whole city were crowded with pilgrims from all over the country, most of them armed. Phasael mounted guard on the city walls and Herod, with a small force, on the palace. Sallying forth against the disorganized attackers in the suburb, the latter slew large numbers of them, put the rest to flight, then shut some of them within the city walls, others in the walled Temple area, and the rest in the entrenched camp outside the walls. (254) Thereupon Antigonus requested the admission of Pacorus [*b*] as mediator. Phasael agreed and offered hospitality to the Parthians who had come with five hundred horsemen ostensibly to put an end to the warfare, but in reality to support Antigonus.

Phasael and Hyrcanus' departure from Jerusalem to negotiate with the Parthians

(255) With this in mind Pacorus cunningly persuaded Phasael to go as ambassador to Barzapharnes to negotiate the cessation of hostilities. Herod strongly tried to dissuade him from going, and advised him to kill the schemer rather than surrender himself to his plotting, since barbarians were faithless by nature. But Phasael went, taking Hyrcanus with him. Pacorus, to allay suspicion, left some of the cavalry called "Freemen" [*c*] by the Parthians with Herod, and escorted Phasael on his way with the rest of his horsemen.

4. Imprisoned by the Parthians

(256) On reaching Galilee they found the inhabitants in revolt and up in arms. The satrap [*a*] who received them in audience was a crafty person who disguised his plans under a show of benevolence: he gave them presents and as they departed he set a trap for them. (257) They became aware of the conspiracy at a seaside town called Ecdippon [*b*]. There they heard that Antigonus had promised a thousand talents [*c*] for the kingdom, and that most of the five hundred women designated by Antigonus to be used by the

Parthians were of their own race; (258) that the foreign troops constantly spied on them at night, and finally, that they would long since have been arrested had their hosts not been waiting until Herod was seized in Jerusalem, before news of what happened to them could put him on his guard. This news was no longer just a rumor; they could now see the sentries posted at some distance.

5. (259) However, despite Ophellius' repeated advice to escape—he had been informed of the entire plot by Saramalla, then the wealthiest of Syrians—Phasael could not overcome his reluctance to desert Hyrcanus. Instead he went to the satrap, and telling him plainly what he thought of the plot, and more particularly for acting as he did for the sake of money, he undertook to give him a larger sum for his life than that which Antigonus has promised for a kingdom. (260) The Parthian made a cunning reply clearing himself of suspicion by protestations and oaths, and went off to Pacorus. Parthians who had been left behind arrested Phasael and Hyrcanus as ordered, while the prisoners cursed them bitterly for perjury and breach of faith.

6. (261) Meanwhile, a plan to kidnap Herod was also being attempted. The cupbearer [*a*] sent to carry it out attempted to lure him outside the walls, as instructed. Herod had suspected the foreigners all along, and learning that a letter notifying him of the plot had fallen into the enemy's hands, he refused to go outside. Though Pacorus argued convincingly that he ought to meet the bearer of the dispatch, which according to him had neither been intercepted nor made any reference to a plot, but fully recorded Phasael's proceedings. (262) But, as it happened, Herod had found out from another source of his brother's arrest. Furthermore, Hyrcanus' daughter Mariamme [*b*], the shrewdest of women, implored him not to go out and trust himself to the foreigners who were now evidently bent on destroying him.

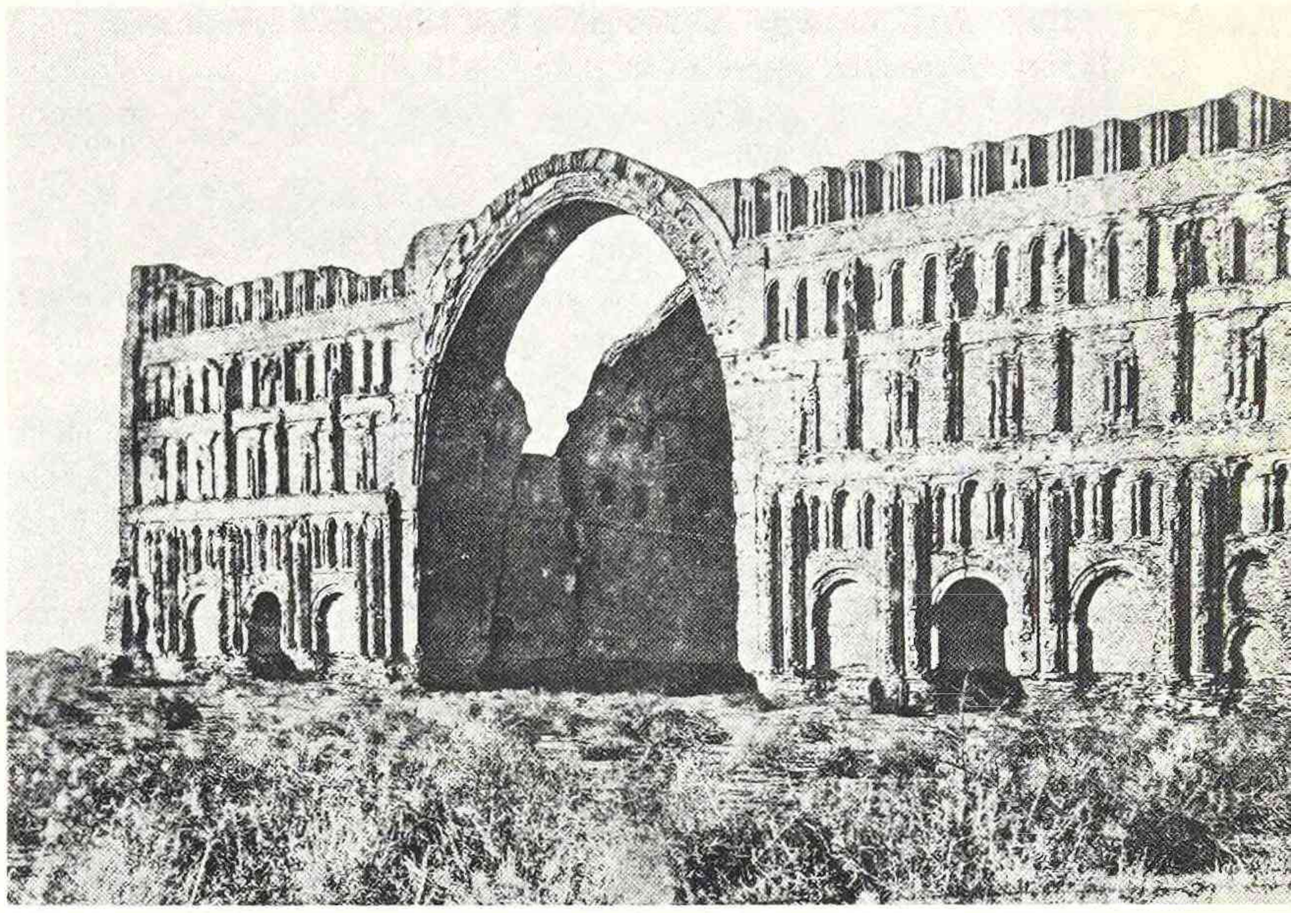
7. Herod's flight to Masada

(263) While Pacorus and his companions were still secretly busy planning to achieve their design—since it was impossible to get the better of such a powerful adversary openly—Herod forestalled them by setting out to Idumaea [*a*] at night unobserved. He took along the nearest and dearest of his family. (264) Upon discovering his flight, the Parthians set out in pursuit. Herod sent his mother and sisters, his young betrothed, her mother and youngest brother ahead to continue their journey, while he and his attendants secured their retreat and held his enemies at bay, killing many in every clash, then pressing on to the stronghold of Masada.

261[*a*] See 249.

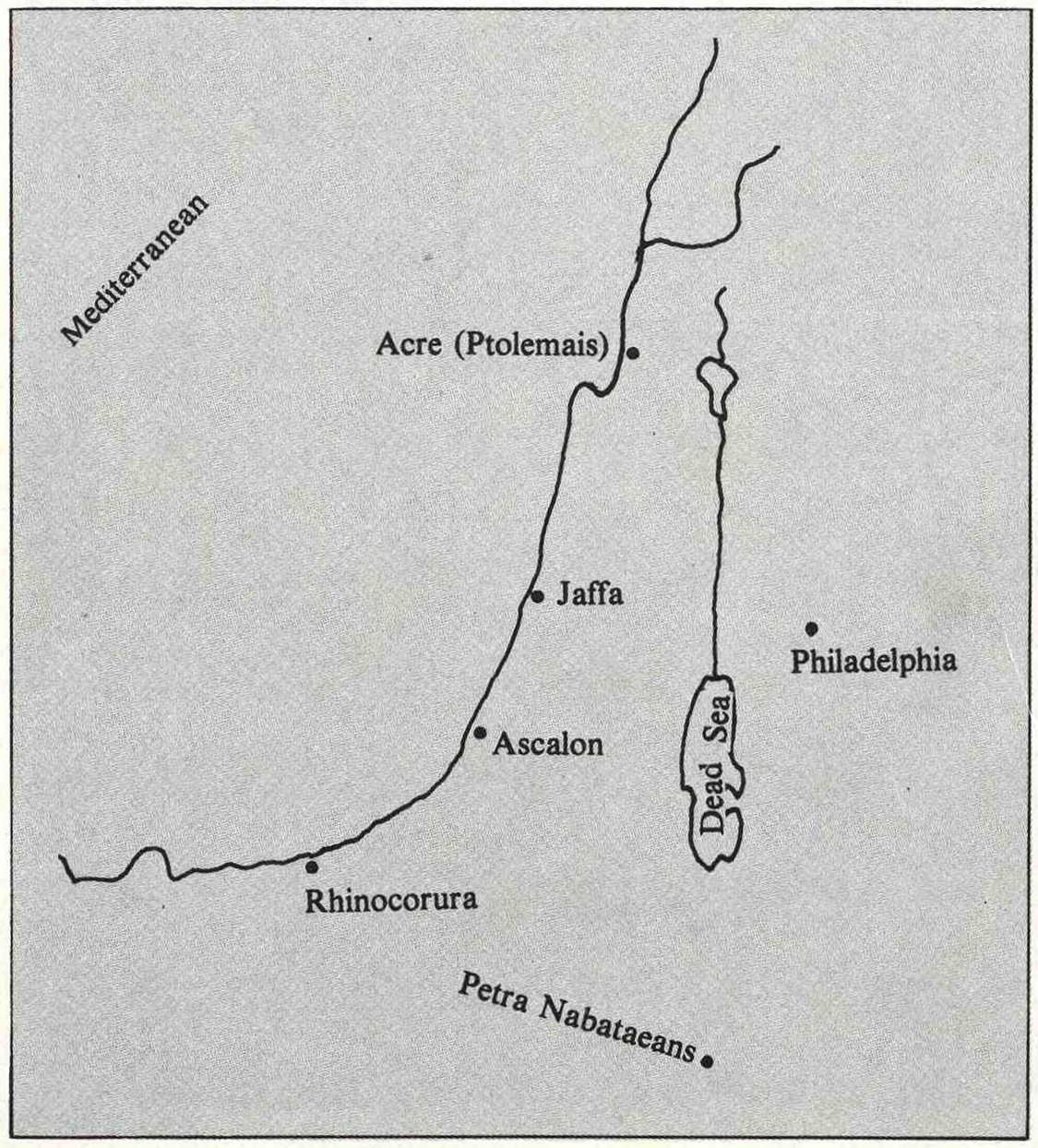
262[*b*] It was in fact Alexandra, mother of Mariamme, the Hasmonean princess (as corrected by A. Schalit, *Herod the King*, p. 50).

263[*a*] Herod's flight to the impregnable stronghold of Masada perched on a steep mountain overlooking the Dead Sea on its western shore. It had been in his possession since he captured it from Malichus.



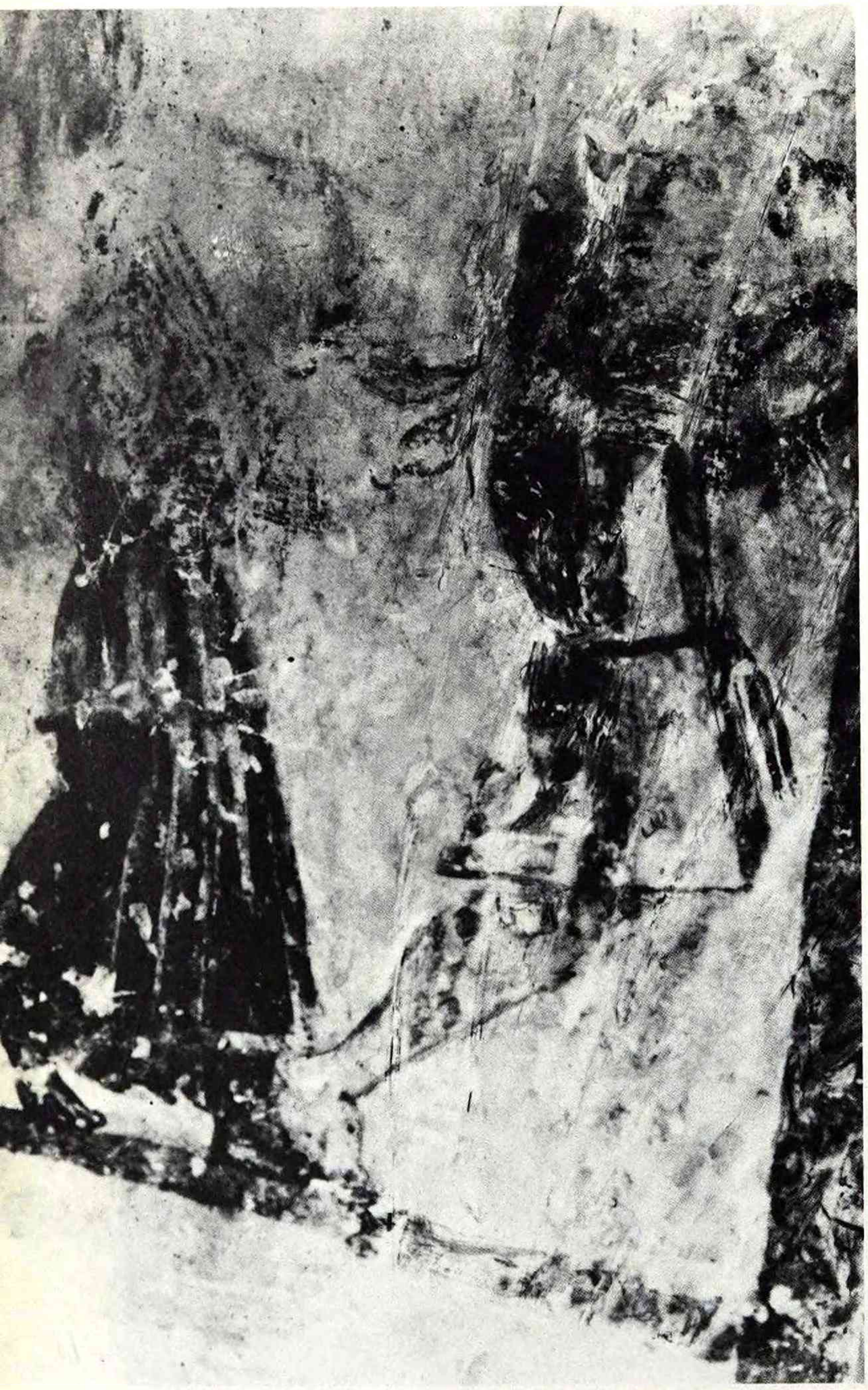
The Parthian palace at Ctesiphon (Louvre Museum)

Scene of Herod's military cooperation with the Romans on the eastern borders of Egypt (Rhinocorura and Pelusium) and his rivalry with the Nabateans who promoted trade over the intercontinental route



265[*b*] *Sixty furlongs* Eleven-and-a-half-kilometers (seven miles).
265[*c*] *Herodion,* described in *War* I, 419 ff.
266[*d*] *Rhesa* or *Horsha,* possibly Khirbet e-Hureisa in southern Judaea. See map of Herod's kingdom.
267[*e*] The main Nabatean city in southern Transjordan, east of the Araba Valley. It is described and illustrated in *War* IV, 454.
268[*a*] The Parthians took it for granted that the high priest's treasure would be taken over by Antigonus, their ally.
268[*b*] *Idumaea* was in the southern part of Judaea.
269[*c*] *Marisa,* identified with Tell Sandahanna, was one of the main cities in southern Judaea (Idumaea), colonized by Sidonians (Phoenicians). The excavations undertaken by R.A.S. Macalister and F.J. Bliss (1898–1900) revealed the plan of a Hellenistic city surrounded by walls and towers, with streets intersected at right angles. Of special importance are the numerous tombs dating from the second century BC (the largest of which are adorned with paintings), a sacred area in the city (*temenos*), and 132 *columbaria* (pigeon coves) dug in the rocks around the city's periphery, which were probably used as repositories for the ashes of cremated bodies. The city was later known as Beth Govrin.
270[*d*] There are other variants of this tale in Talmudic lore. But this form of punishment was a Parthian custom, and as Hyrcanus was a Parthian prisoner, they punished him as they were commanded to do.

Wall paintings adorning the burial caves of Maresha which was colonized by pagan Sidonians



8. (265) During his flight he had more trouble with the Jewish pursuers than with the Parthians, as the former attacked him all the way. Some sixty furlongs [*b*] from the city they caught up with him, and a pitched battle began that lasted a long time. Herod defeated them, killing many. To commemorate his victory he subsequently erected a town at the site, with costly palaces and an enormously strong citadel, and called it Herodion after himself [*c*]. (266) As he continued his flight he was later joined by many others. On reaching Rhesa [*d*], in Idumaea, he was advised by his brother Joseph to divest himself of the bulk of his followers as Masada could not possibly accommodate so large a number—over nine thousand. (267) Herod agreed and sent those who were more of a burden than a help to him to various parts of Idumaea, supplying them with provisions. With the toughest fighters, as well as his family and kinfolk, he arrived safely at the fortress. Leaving a guard of eight hundred men to protect the women, and sufficient provisions to withstand a siege, he hurried on to Petra in Arabia [*e*].

9. (268) The Parthians turned to looting in Jerusalem, breaking into the houses of the fugitives and into the palace; they spared only Hyrcanus' money which did not exceed three hundred talents [*a*]. They found less than they had expected elsewhere as Herod, long suspicious of Parthian trustworthiness, had already put most of his valuable possessions in Idumaea [*b*]—an example followed by all his friends. (269) After the looting, Parthian insolence reached extremes. They filled the country with the horror of war, destroyed the city of Marisa [*c*], and not satisfied only with crowning Antigonus, they handed Phasael and Hyrcanus over to him in fetters, to be tortured. (270) When Hyrcanus fell at his feet, Antigonus mutilated his ears with his own teeth [*d*] so that never again, under any change of circumstances, could he resume the high priesthood, for a high priest must be physically perfect.

10. Phasael's violent death

(271) Phasael however, not free to use hand or steel, was too quick for him, courageously dashing his head upon a rock, Thus, he showed himself to be a true brother of Herod, and Hyrcanus to be a most infamous man. He died like a hero, crowning his life's work with a fitting end. (272) Another account of the incident relates that Phasael recovered somewhat from his self-inflicted wounds, but a physician sent by Antigonus, ostensibly to attend him, filled his wound with noxious drugs and put an end to his life. Whichever account is correct, the initial attempt redounds to his honor. It is also related that before he died he was informed by a woman of Herod's escape. "Now," he called out, "I shall die happy as I am leaving behind me a man to avenge me of my enemies."

11. (273) This is how Phasael died. The Parthians,

who failed to capture their most coveted prize—the women—installed Antigonus as ruler in Jerusalem and carried off Hyrcanus to Parthia.

Chapter XIV

1. Herod repulsed by Malchus the Arab king repulses

(274) Herod, believing that his brother was still alive, went hastily into Arab territory to obtain from the king money, with which he expected to persuade the greedy barbarians to spare Phasael. If the Arab would not be mindful of his former ties of friendship with Herod's father, or be too mean to make him a gift, he hoped to borrow the amount of the ransom, leaving in pledge the son of the prisoner he wished to redeem. (275) He was prepared to pay three hundred talents, offering as guarantors the Tyrians who had volunteered their good offices. But fate had forestalled his earnest efforts. Phasael was dead and Herod's brotherly affection was of no avail. He also discovered that the Arabs were no longer his allies. (276) In fact, their King Malchus sent orders for him to leave his territory at once on the pretence that the Parthians had formally demanded Herod's expulsion from Arabia. The truth of the matter was that he was determined not to repay the debt he owed Antipater, nor to be shamed into making the slightest compensation for Antipater's generosity by any kindness to his children in their distress. His advisers in this shameless conduct were his most powerful courtiers, who were equally anxious to embezzle the funds Antipater had deposited with them.

2. Herod in Egypt and Rhodes on his way to Rome

(277) Herod, on encountering this Arab hostility, for the very same reasons that he had expected their warm friendship, replied to the messengers as his feelings dictated and turned back towards Egypt. The first night he encamped in one of the temples of the country where he picked up the men he had left behind [*a*]. The next day he proceeded to Rhinocorura [*b*], where he first received the news of his brother's death. (278) Deeply grieved though he was, and his anxiety notwithstanding, he put aside his worries and resumed his journey. The Arab king, regretting his behavior, quickly dispatched messengers to recall the man he had insulted; but Herod had already reached Pelusium [*c*]. Refused passage by the fleet stationed in the harbor he appealed to the authorities, who showing respect for his fame and rank, escorted him to Alexandria. (279) Upon entering the city he was received with great magnificence by Cleopatra [*d*], who hoped to entrust him with the command of a campaign she was preparing; but he evaded the queen's pressing request. Fearing neither the perils of mid-winter nor the turmoil in Italy, he sailed for Rome.

3. (280) Nearly shipwrecked off Pamphylia [*a*], he

277[*a*] On the eastern border of Sinai, close to the Nabataean caravan routes.

277[*b*] Modern el-Arish in northern Sinai, a maritime center on the borderline between Palestine and Egypt serving both countries.

278[*c*] A garrison town and harbor at the head of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, on the eastern border of Egypt.

279[*d*] Josephus has valuable facts regarding Herod's relationship with Queen Cleopatra VII, who married Mark Antony, but their chronology is confused. When she first met him he was just a young man struggling to uphold Antony's interests, and he did not disclose his plans regarding Judaea. Had he done so she would have regarded him as her enemy and might have eliminated him, for she still imagined she had the right to rule over Judaea and Coele-Syria, the ancient province of the Ptolemies that she regarded as her ancestral inheritance. The sequel of her ambitions is described in 362[*c*].

280[*a*] *Herod's flight to Rome and appointment as vassal king by the Roman Senate* Pamphylia was a maritime town on the southern coast of Asia Minor; the boats plying the eastern Mediterranean used to sail close to shore from port to port. This was the end of winter 39–38 BC. He therefore left for Rome at a time when the winds were fiercest. He was determined to proceed there quickly as he had been betrayed by everyone in the east. His last hope lay in seeking Roman help against Antigonus, an ally of the Parthians who were Rome's enemies.

Nabatean bath

Nabatean inscription on stone reading (U) Shan grandson of An(MU)

280[*b*] A warship, or trireme, was a long, narrow, fast vessel equipped with three tiers of oars.

282[*a*] See 244[*d*].

283[*b*] See 187.

283[*c*] *Antiquities* XIV, 275–278 specifies that Herod promised to reward him in return for the crown of Judaea. This detail is more convincing in the light of later developments. A. Schalit believes that Herod's elevation to kingship by Roman fiat was facilitated by Phasael's death, since Rome no longer needed to fear any dynastic rivalries in Herod's entourage. In addition, the triumvirs in Republican Rome felt that Herod was the most suitable ruler to protect Roman interests in a country as disturbed as Judaea (A. Schalit, *Herod the King*, p. 51). The Romans regarded Antigonus as their avowed enemy since he had joined forces with the Parthians. In contrast, Herod was a strong ruler descended from a house friendly to Rome. Herod turned out to be the man who could bridge the gap between Rome and Judaea, as the tale of his career, which unfolds to the end of *War I*, testifies.

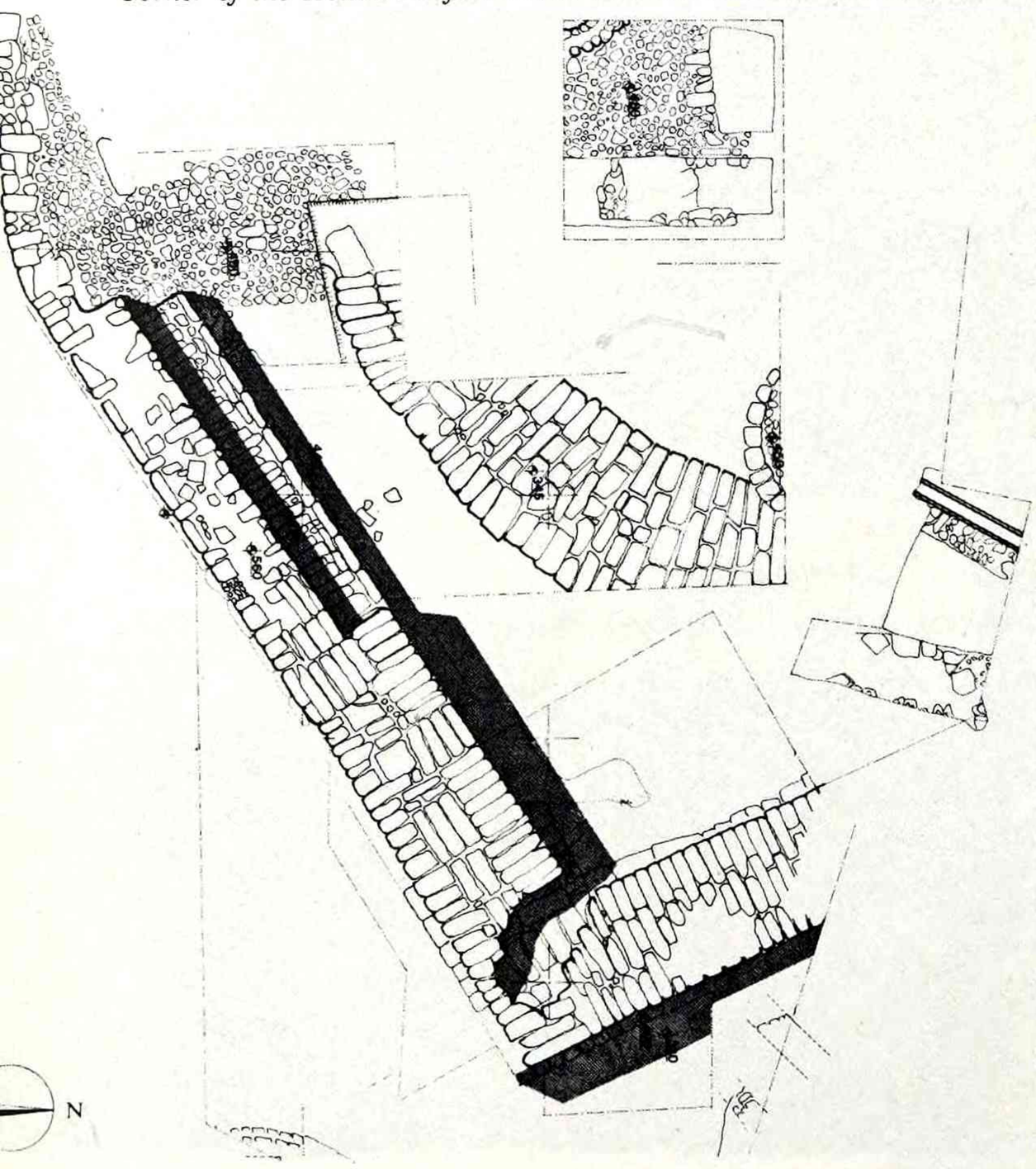
285[*d*] Though a Jew, Herod did not shun the pagan sacrifice.

285[*e*] Herod's act of walking between the two triumvirs to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus and taking part in the rites in his honor, has been regarded as symbolic of his reign, which stood between two unbridgeable worlds—the spiritual world of the Jews and the Graeco-Roman way of life.

285[*f*] Herod now left Rome as an "allied king and friend of the Roman people," *rex socius et amicus populi Romani.* Besides voting Herod the title of King of Judaea, the kingdom was enlarged by the incorporation of Samaria for taxation purposes.

286[*a*] *Herod's return and his struggle against Antigonus* In addition to the early reservoirs dating back to the time of Antigonus' siege, more elaborate installations to ensure Masada's water supply were constructed later, during Herod's prosperous reign (*War* VII, 291).

Corner of the Hellenistic fort which was excavated at Ptolemais–Acre



jettisoned most of the cargo and with difficulty made it to Rhodes, which had suffered heavily from the war with Cassius. He was received there by his friends Ptolemy and Sapphinius. Shortage of money did not prevent him from having a large warship built [*b*], (281) which carried him and his friends to Brundisium, from whence he sped to Rome. He first applied to Antony as his father's friend, telling him of his and his family's misfortunes, how he had to leave his nearest and dearest behind besieged in a fortress, while he crossed the sea in the dead of winter to appeal for aid.

4. Herod declared "King of the Jews" by Antony and the Senate

(282) Antony was deeply touched by Herod's reversal of fortune. He was influenced by the recollection of Antipater's hospitality, and above all, by admiration for the heroic qualities of the man before him. He determined then and there that the man he had previously appointed tetrarch [*a*] should be made king of the Jews. While he was moved by admiration for Herod, he was equally motivated by his dislike for Antigonus whom he considered to be a promoter of sedition and an enemy of Rome. (283) Herod found Caesar an even more ready champion than Antony, since he remembered vividly the Egyptian campaign that Antipater had undertaken with his father [*b*], his hospitality and unshakable loyalty; at the same time he perceived Herod's readiness for action [*c*]. (284) He convened the Senate before whom Messala, followed by Atratinus, presented Herod and gave an account of his father's services and his own loyalty to the Roman people. At the same time he made it clear that Antigonus was their enemy, not only on account of their earlier quarrel with him, but because he had defied Rome by accepting his crown from the Parthians. These considerations impressed the Senate, and when Antony came forward to suggest that the Parthian war was an added reason to elevate Herod to kingship, they all voted in his favor. (285) The meeting was adjourned, and Antony and Caesar left the Senate house with Herod between them, and with the consuls and other magistrates leading the way in order to offer sacrifices [*d*] and to deposit the decree in the Capitol [*e*]. Antony celebrated the first day of Herod's reign by giving a banquet [*f*].

Chapter XV

1. Antigonus' siege of Masada

(286) All this time Antigonus kept up the siege of Masada; its defenders were well supplied with stores of food, but they were in want of water [*a*]. Consequently, Herod's brother Joseph and two hundred of his men decided to escape to Arabia, having heard that Malchus regretted his bad treatment of Herod. (287) But rain fell in torrents on the very night that he

was set to leave the fortress; the reservoirs were replenished and Joseph had no further need to escape. Instead, the garrison began to carry out sorties against Antigonus' forces and destroyed a considerable number in open combat and in ambush [*b*]. They were not always successful; they met with occasional reverses and were forced to retire.

2. Intervention by the Romans

(288) Meanwhile Ventidius [*a*], the Roman commander sent from Syria to check the Parthians, had advanced into Judaea avowedly to assist Joseph and his men, but really to get money out of Antigonus. (289) He encamped in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem, and after collecting an ample reward, withdrew with most of his troops; but he left Silo in command of a detachment, fearing that the removal of the whole army would betray his mercenary actions. Antigonus meanwhile, hoping for renewed assistance from the Parthians, courted Silo to prevent any provocations before his expectations were realized.

3. Herod's return to Palestine and his rescue of his family

(290) By then Herod had sailed from Italy to Ptolemais [*a*], and after collecting a considerable army of foreign and native troops, marched through Galilee against Antigonus with the cooperation of Ventidius and Silo, whom Dellius, Antony's emissary, had induced to assist in Herod's reinstatement. (291) Ventidius, however, was occupied in quelling sporadic disturbances resulting from the Parthian occupation, and Silo lingered in Judaea, bribed with Antigonus' money. But Herod did not lack support; new recruits added to his strength daily as he moved on, and with few exceptions, all Galilee took up his cause [*b*]. (292) The most urgent task facing him was Masada and the liberation of his relatives and friends from the siege. But Joppa [*c*] was a hostile town and an obstacle that had to be reduced first so that no enemy stronghold would be left in his rear while he marched on Jerusalem. Silo, who was pleased to have a pretext for leaving Jerusalem, proceeded to join Herod; but he was closely pursued by the Jews. Herod swooped on them with a handful of men, routed them and rescued Silo who was making a poor defense.

4. Beginning of the campaign

(293) After capturing Joppa, Herod hurried on to Masada to rescue his relatives. People from the countryside were drawn to him by their affection for his father, some by his own fame, others to repay benefits from both, but the majority by expectations from him when his kingly title was assured. Consequently he had put together a formidable army. (294) Antigonus tried to delay Herod's progress by setting ambushes in suitable passes, but these caused little or no harm to his enemy. Herod found no difficulty in rescuing his relatives at Masada, and in recovering the fortress of Rhesa [*a*]. He marched against Jerusalem

287[*b*] While Herod had been abroad, the country obviously sided with Antigonus the Hasmonean, who was in control. Herod permitted himself no more than a week's stay in Rome due to his precarious position in Judaea; only the fortress of Masada held out against Antigonus.

288[*a*] Although Ventidius refrained from driving Antigonus out of Jerusalem, his military superiority prevented the Hasmonean king from operating vigorously against the rest of Herod's family. He could not yet afford to mount a regular siege of Jerusalem—despite the blow suffered by the Parthians they had not yet despaired—and a resumption of the war was to be expected. Ventidius quit the country leaving only part of his army in Judaea under the command of Silo, who also observed the truce with Antigonus.

290[*a*] *Ptolemais—Acre* It was no easy matter to usurp his kingdom from Antigonus. The Senate offered him no assistance after giving him the authority to regain control of the country. At this stage he had to hire mercenaries and local forces by whatever means available. In the meantime he had to conquer Galilee, since the Roman legate of Syria had not yet carried out the Senate's decree in favor of Herod by intervening in his behalf (See 288–291).

291[*b*] Some people in Galilee harbored anti-Herodian feelings because of the capture and execution of their local hero, Ezekias (see 204[*a*]). It is doubtful whether Herod succeeded in completely subduing the seditious Galilee until the end of his campaigns in Palestine three years later (40–37 BC).

292[*c*] *Joppa,* now part of modern Tel-Aviv, had a mixed Jewish and gentile population that was hostile to the Idumaean aristocracy in Judaea. After his unsuccessful march against Galilee he had to retreat and invade Idumaea (in southern Judaea) by way of the coastal plain. He planned to gain control of the south and use it as a base from which he could act against Jerusalem. By freeing Masada he could release his family who had been besieged there since his flight in 40 BC. By gaining Idumaea he acquired a safe base where the inhabitants were loyal to his family.

294[*a*] See 266[*d*]. The ancient route to Masada was not along the western shore of the Dead Sea which is a modern road; it traversed the mountain range south of Hebron and passed desert forts such as Rhesa (Khirbet Hureisa).

Acre (ancient Ptolemais). Its old harbor and later fortifications stood over the remains of the ancient town

where he was joined by Silo's troops and by many Jews from the city who were alarmed at the strength of his army.

5. Herod's siege of Jerusalem

(295) Having pitched their camp west [*a*] of the town, Herod's forces became targets for the arrows and javelins of the guards on that side, while others sallied out in companies and attacked his outposts. Herod ordered heralds to patrol around the walls and proclaim that he had come for the good of the people and the preservation of the city; that he did not intend to take any action even against avowed enemies, and would grant amnesty even to his bitterest foes. (296) But when Antigonus' men countered the appeals, forbidding anyone to listen to these proclamations or to cross over to the enemy, Herod gave his men leave to counterattack the assailants on the ramparts: the missiles thrown by Herod's men soon drove all the defenders out of the towers [*b*].

6. (297) At this point Silo's corruption became evident. He persuaded many of his men to raise a clamor about short rations, to demand money for food, and to insist upon being marched out to suitable winter quarters, as Antigonus' troops had already reduced the neighborhood of the city to a wasteland. He therefore broke camp and started to withdraw. (298) But Herod approached Silo's officers and then appealed to the assembled rank and file not to leave him in the lurch since he had come with the authority of Caesar, Antony and the Senate; "I will relieve your wants this very day," he promised. (299) He immediately followed this appeal by setting off in person into the countryside, bringing back such an abundance of supplies as to expose all Silo's pretexts. To guard against any possible shortage in the days to come, he instructed the inhabitants of the Samaria district—that city having supported his cause—to bring grain, wine, oil and cattle down to Jericho. (300) Hearing of this, Antigonus sent orders throughout the country to hold up or ambush the food convoys. Many people obeyed and stationed themselves, armed, above Jericho to watch for the supply columns. (301) But Herod was alerted and set off for Jericho with ten cohorts [*a*], five Roman and five Jewish, including mercenaries and a small body of cavalry. He found the city deserted and the heights [*b*] occupied by five hundred men, their wives and families. (302) He took them prisoner and then freed them, while the Romans roamed through the town looting the houses which they found full of valuable possessions of every kind. Leaving a garrison in Jericho, the king returned and dismissed the Roman contingent to winter quarters in the districts that had come over to him—Idumaea, Galilee and Samaria. Antigonus, for his part, bribed Silo to induce him to quarter part of his army in Lydda [*c*], in order to ingratiate himself with Antony.

295[*a*] *The attempt to seize Jerusalem* Herod dared to march directly on Jerusalem in an attempt to launch a surprise attack, hoping thus to end the whole campaign with one bold stroke. But, encamped before the western walls, he realized that his forces were inadequate for the purpose. In addition, the ground sloped downwards at that point giving the javelin and missile throwers a clear advantage.

296[*b*] See illustrations of battlements and towers of Jerusalem's western wall dating from late Hasmonean days.

301[*a*] *Cohort,* a division of the Roman army.

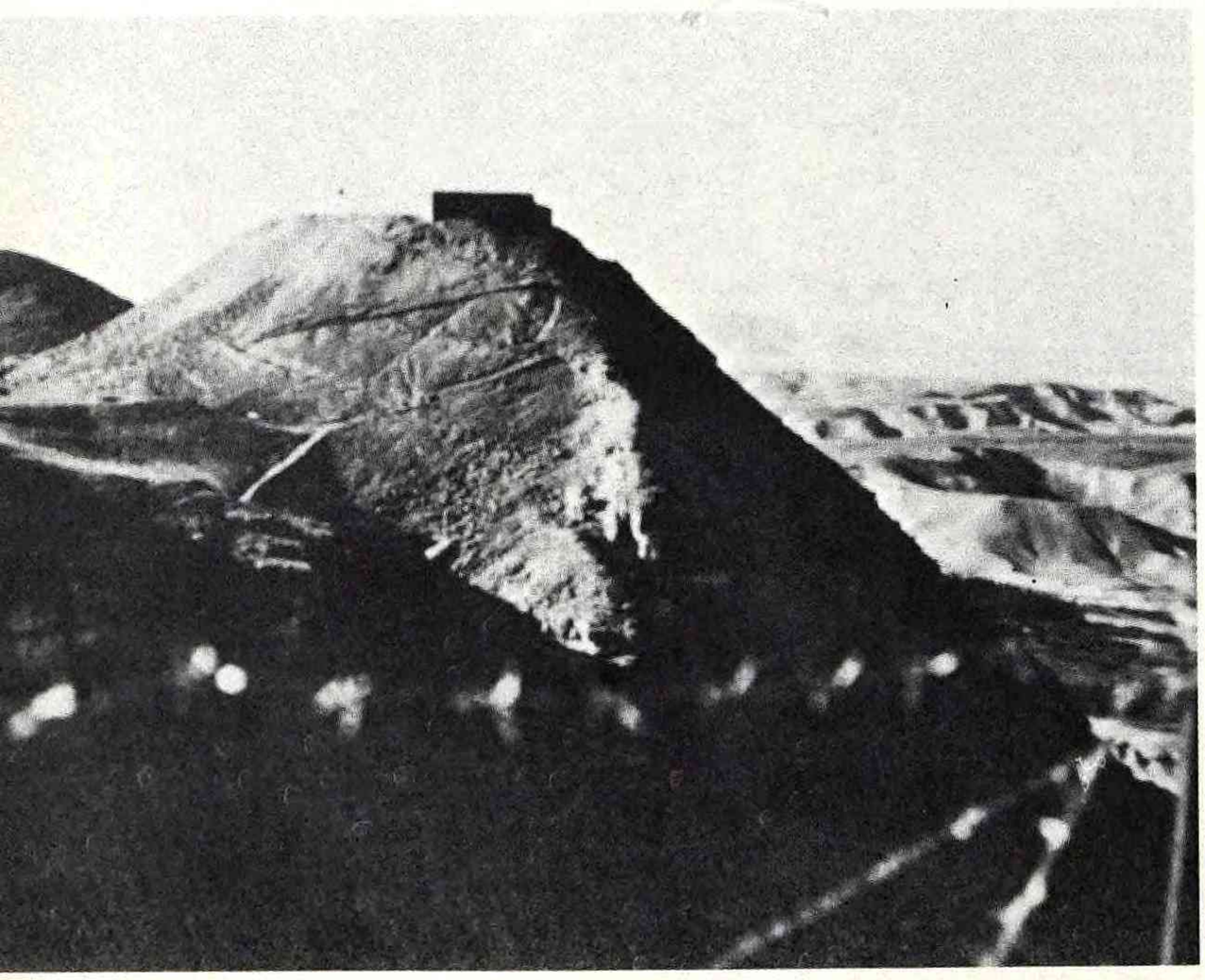
301[*b*] The fortress overlooking Jericho from the west, which is situated in the plain, below sea level.

302[*c*] Lydda lay on the western border of Judaea—far from the other Judaean quarters—and offered permanent huts and more comfortable winter camps. Antigonus may have intended to weaken the Roman cohort's allegiance to Herod by this. A. Schalit assumes, on the basis of *Antiquities* XIV, 403 ff., that Antigonus and Silo had agreed to an armistice. That may help to explain the ambiguous military situation in the winter of 39–38 BC.

303[*a*] Southern Judaea.

304[*a*] *Sepphoris,* identified with present day Saffuriyeh, five kilometers northwest of Nazareth, had been the largest city in Galilee, and its capture represented a great victory for Herod, because from it he could carry out raids in the surrounding areas. The city was closely associated with Josephus' career (as will be seen in *War* III, 30-34; 56; 129). Excavations have unearthed a Crusader church, its walls built partly of Roman architectural stones and sarcophagi of that period, and remains of a Roman villa below it. A Roman fort was uncovered on the acropolis, and a large amphitheater nearby, equipped to seat 4,000–5,000 people, had been dug out of the rocky slope. Extensive remains of an elaborate water supply system—an aqueduct, tunnel and reservoirs—belong to the same period.

The heights referred to included the fortified peak of Doq which commanded the Jericho plain and its plantations



Chapter XVI

1. Herod's winter campaign in Idumaea and Galilee

(303) While the Romans enjoyed every comfort and a complete rest from fighting, Herod was not idle. He occupied Idumaea [*a*] with two thousand infantry and four hundred horsemen that he dispatched there under his brother Joseph to forestall any insurrection in support of Antigonus. He busied himself with the removal of his mother, kinsmen and friends from Masada to Samaria; as soon as they were settled there he set out to reduce the remaining Galilean strongholds and to expel Antigonus' garrisons.

2. (304) Pushing on to Sepphoris [*a*] through a very heavy snowstorm he captured the city without opposition, since the garrison had fled at his approach. Provisions were abundant there, and he refreshed his troops who had been severely battered by the storm. He next set out on a campaign against the cave-dwelling rebels [*b*] who terrorized a large part of the country, causing the inhabitants as much misery as a war could have done. (305) Sending three battalions of infantry and a squadron of cavalry to the village of Arbel [*c*], he joined them forty days later with the rest of his army. Undaunted by his approach, the enemy, who possessed the experience of seasoned fighters and the fearlessness of rebels, came out to meet him, and joining battle, routed Herod's left wing with their right. (306) Promptly swinging his own right wing around—where he was in command—Herod came to the rescue; he not only checked the flight of his men, but fell upon their pursuers and broke their charge until, overpowered by his frontal attacks, they finally retired.

3. The tragedy of the caves of Arbel

(307) Herod pursued them right to the Jordan, attacking all the time and destroying a large number of them, while the survivors scattered beyond the river. Galilee was apparently rid of their terror, except for those still hidden in the caves. Their total extermination, however, would require time. (308) Herod first bestowed on his soldiers the fruits of their toil, awarding each a hundred and fifty silver drachmas [*a*] and larger sums to their officers, and then dismissed them to their winter quarters. He appointed his youngest brother Pheroras to lay in stores of provisions for the army [*b*], as well as to fortify the walls of Alexandrion—both tasks being carried out to his satisfaction.

4. (309) During this period Antony was living near Athens, and Ventidius summoned Silo and Herod to participate in the Parthian war, instructing them to settle the Judaean problem first. Herod gladly relegated Silo to Ventidius and set out on a campaign against the rebels in the caves. (310) These caves opened onto steep cliffs that could only be reached by

304[*b*] These were really Zealot rebels, and more specifically Zealots who opposed Herod, as is evident from Josephus' own description in the following text. The genesis of the Zealot movement is described extensively in 204[*a*]. Herod conducted his Galilee campaign without external aid and concentrated his efforts against the Zealots.

305[*c*] *Arbel,* northwest of the Sea of Galilee. is close to the canyons and caves of that name. (See map and illustration of the caves.) Herod never let up, and his war of extermination lasted many days according to *Antiquities* XIV, 421–423. The present text also indicates that Herod had not, as previously stated, completely subdued Galilee and had to fight hard there in 39–38 BC. He required a strong base there for the final struggle with Antigonus.

308[*a*] The talent of silver was worth six thousand drachmas.

308[*b*] *Antiquities* XIV, 418 specifies that these provisions were intended for Silo's soldiers. Though they tried to help him after their failure in the siege of Jerusalem, he did not use them and attended to their commissariat through Pheroras, as Antigonus had cut off their supplies. (see 302).

The Galilean mountain hideout and the caves of Arbel

steep, narrow, winding paths; from the cliff caves there was a sheer drop into deep ravines far below, at the bottom of which were wadis. For quite some time the king was helpless because of the difficulties of the terrain, and he finally resorted to a most dangerous plan. (311) He lowered the toughest of his soldiers in baskets [*a*], giving them access to the mouths of the caves; they then slaughtered the rebels and their families, hurling firebrands at those who tried to resist. Wishing to save some of them, Herod's herald summoned them to him, but none surrendered voluntarily [*b*]. Of those who were brought out forcibly, many preferred death to captivity. (312) In one case, seven children and their mother begged the father, an old man, for permission to come out, as their lives were guaranteed; but he ordered them to come forward one by one, and standing at the mouth of the cave, he killed each son as he emerged. Herod, watching the spectacle from a convenient position, was cut to the heart; he stretched out his hand toward the old man, begging him to spare his children. (313) The man treated Herod's words with contempt, and even taunted him as a cowardly person. After his sons he killed his wife, then threw their bodies down the cliff and threw himself after them [*c*].

5. Fresh Zealot rising in Galilee

(314) Having captured the caves and their dwellers, Herod left behind what he considered a suitable contingent under Ptolemy's command to suppress uprisings. He returned to Samaria with three thousand heavy infantry and six hundred cavalry to combat Antigonus. (315) Encouraged by his departure, the habitual troublemakers in Galilee mounted a surprise attack on his general Ptolemy, slew him and systematically ravaged the country, then found refuge in the marshes [*a*] and other inaccessible places of the district. (316) Informed of the uprising, Herod returned in haste to the rescue, destroyed a large number of the insurgents, besieged and destroyed all their strongholds, and imposed a fine of a hundred talents on their towns in punishment for their defection.

6. The Parthians defeated by Ventidius

(317) When the Parthians had at last been expelled [*a*] and Pacorus slain, Antony instructed Ventidius to dispatch a thousand horsemen and two legions to support Herod in his struggles with Antigonus. Antigonus wrote to the officer in command, Machaeras, begging him to come to his assistance instead, complaining bitterly of Herod's violent and abusive treatment of the country, and adding a promise of money. (318) Machaeras, not prepared to hold his superior's orders in contempt, especially as Herod offered a larger reward, could not be enticed to turn traitor; but simulating friendship, he went to spy on Antigonus, disregarding Herod's warnings to dissuade him. (319) Antigonus was aware of Machaeras' intentions and would not admit him into the city, repulsing him from

311[*a*] *Clearing out the rebels in Galilee* The baskets, made of woven branches, were especially suited to mountain warfare.

311[*b*] But *Antiquities* XIV, 427 states that many did surrender.

313[*c*] This was one among scores of Jewish suicides. One of the most tragic was the mass suicide at Masada (see *War* VII, 389 ff).

315[*a*] The marshes of Lake Huleh in Upper Galilee covered with tropical overgrowth.

317[*a*] They were expelled on June 9, 38 BC.

319[*b*] Some historians have tried to explain this ambiguous situation by comparing it with the parallel account in *Antiquities* XIV, 435, where Machaeras is represented as any ally of Antigonus; his intervention in Jerusalem was only made to keep up appearances. In the present account Machaeras rejects Antigonus' offer and sells himself to Herod, the highest bidder. The latter has no illusions about him, even though they have been reconciled. His brother's carelessness and death worried him even more.

321[*a*] After two years of fruitless fighting, Herod realized that he could not conquer the kingdom by himself. He needed aid on a much larger scale, and again he turned to Antony who was already encamped at Samosata.

321[*b*] *Samosata,* in the kingdom of Commagene, north of Syria, was ruled by Antigonus. After its capture by the Romans they were free to help Herod wage war on Antigonus.

322[*c*] This term is not used deprecatingly, but refers to the peoples of Asia-Minor and Mesopotamia, east of the Roman empire. (See Preamble.)

326[*a*] The southern part of Judaea.

326[*b*] *Gittha* is Gittaim, southwest of Joppa (Tel-Aviv) in the Philistine plain. *Antiquities* XIV, 50 states that it is in Judaea instead of Idumaea.

327[*c*] Antony agreed to a large force, led by Sosius (the governor of Syria in 38–37 BC), at Herod's disposal and under his supreme command. Two legions would give him preliminary aid, while the rest of the army under Sosius would come later. In any case, it was Sosius who received Antigonus' capitulation. However, the pillage by his troops turned out to be a real calamity for Judaea.

329[*a*] In *Antiquities* XV, 452, the night march started from Ptolemais (Acre), near the southwesten edge of Galilee.

330[*b*] Promised by the Romans (see 327). In the first stage of his advance Herod had apparently overcome resistance in Galilee.

334[*a*] "Cana" is an error. According to *Antiquities* XIV, 458, the site was Yeshana (Burj el-Sanah or Khirbet el-Burj) some thirty kilometers north of Jerusalem, where Herod defeated Pappus, Antigonus' commander, and proceeded to Jerusalem in the winter of 38–37 BC.

Chained Parthian prisoners

the ramparts as an enemy. Ashamed, Machaeras [*b*] retired to Emmaus and rejoined Herod's forces. Infuriated by his defeat, he slew all the Jews he met on the way, not even sparing Herod's partisans, but treating everyone as an Antigonus supporter.

7. Herod's assistance to Antony at Samosata

(320) Angered, Herod set out to attack Machaeras as an enemy. Mastering his rage, he set out instead to Antony's headquarters to lodge a complaint against the commander's transgressions. Machaeras, realizing his mistake, followed on the king's heels, and by dint of entreaties managed to appease him. (321) But Herod continued his journey to join Antony [*a*]; when he was informed that Antony, at the head of a large army, was assaulting Samosata [*b*], a strong city near the Euphrates, he increased his speed, sensing a unique opportunity to display his courage and to please Antony. (322) In fact, his arrival brought the siege to a conclusion. He killed large numbers of the barbarians [*c*] and captured abundant booty. Antony's old admiration for Herod's prowess was greatly strengthened, confirming his high expectations of Herod when he mounted the throne, and he heaped new honors upon him. Meanwhile, King Antiochus had been forced to surrender Samosata.

Chapter XVII

1. Defeat of Joseph, Herod's brother

(323) Herod's cause in Judaea was dealt a heavy blow. He had left his brother Joseph in charge of the country, enjoining him to make no move against Antigonus until his return, since Machaeras' reliability as an ally was questionable from past experience. But as soon as Joseph heard that his brother was a long way off, he disregarded his instructions and marched towards Jericho with five cohorts sent to him by Machaeras; he went with the intention of seizing the grain crop at the height of the summer. (324) On his way over difficult ground in hilly country he was attacked by his adversaries and killed after displaying great gallantry in the battle, while the whole Roman force perished to a man. These cohorts had been new levies from Syria with no mixture of veterans among them to strengthen the morale of the raw recruits.

2. Renewed revolts in Galilee and Idumaea

(325) Not satisfied with his victory, Antigonus' rage was so extreme that he even mutilated Joseph's corpse. After having gotten possession of the dead bodies, he cut off his head, although Pheroras, brother of the deceased, offered to redeem the body for fifty talents. (326) Antigonus' victory led to such a serious upheaval in Galilee that his partisans dragged Herod's leading adherents to the lake [of Galilee] and drowned them. Many parts of Idumaea [*a*] also defected although Machaeras was there rebuilding the walls of a fortress called Ghitta [*b*]. (327) Herod was still unaware of all this. After the capture of Samosata Antony appointed Sossius governor of Syria, instructing him to assist Herod against Antigonus; Antony then returned to Egypt. Sossius sent two legions on ahead to Judaea to assist Herod, following on his heels with the rest of the army [*c*].

3. Herod's return to Judaea

(328) While Herod was at Daphne, near Antioch, a dream clearly foretold his brother's death. Springing horrified from his bed, he was met by messengers who came with news of the disaster. Lamenting his loss briefly, he postponed further mourning for a later day and quickly set off to meet his foes. (329) By forced marches he reached Lebanon where he received reinforcements of eight hundred hillmen and was joined by one of the Roman legions. With these troops he invaded Galilee [*a*] without waiting for daylight, and was met by his foes whom he drove back to their base. (330) He carried out repeated assaults on their stronghold, but before he could reduce it a terrific storm compelled him to seek shelter in the nearby villages. A few days later he was joined by the second of Antony's legions [*b*], and his increased strength alarmed the enemy who evacuated the stronghold under cover of night.

4. Herod's miraculous escape

(331) Herod next marched rapidly through Jericho in quick pursuit of his brother's murderers. There, thanks to divine providence, he had a miraculous and astonishing escape that earned him the reputation as a special favorite of heaven. He had dined that evening in the company of several magistrates, and after the banquet ended and everyone had gone, the building suddenly caved in. (332) Considering this an omen of the dangers and deliverance in the campaign ahead, he put his troops in motion at dawn. Some six thousand of the enemy charged down from the hills and engaged his advance guard; they did not dare to meet the Romans in hand-to-hand combat, but pelted them at long range with stones and javelins, wounding many, including Herod who was struck by a javelin in his side as he rode along.

5. (333) Antigonus, wishing to create an impression that his men were not only superior in daring, but also in numbers, dispatched an army to Samaria under one of his comrades-in-arms, Pappus, who was commissioned to fight Machaeras. (334) Herod ravaged the enemy territory, reduced five small towns, slew two thousand of their inhabitants, set fire to the houses, and returned to his camp near a village called Cana [*a*].

6. Defeat of Pappus, commander of Antigonus

(335) A multitude of Jews from Jericho and other places joined Herod daily, some drawn to him by their

hatred of Antigonus, others by his successes, but most by a blind longing for change. Herod was impatient for a fight, and Pappus, undeterred either by the superior numbers or the energy of his adversaries, advanced eagerly against them. (336) When the two armies clashed, most of the enemy lines stood firm for a time; but Herod, spurred by the memory of his murdered brother, and risking everything to avenge him, quickly overcame the troops facing him. He then directed his attacks against any groups that still held out and routed the whole army. (337) Antigonus' men were driven back into the village from which they had set out, with Herod chasing them and massacring untold numbers. Together with the enemy he rushed into the village; he found every house packed with armed soldiers and the roofs crowded with others who threw missiles down at him. (338) First defeating those on the outside, he tore the houses to pieces and dragged out those who were within. He destroyed them en masse when he brought the roofs down on their heads; those who escaped from beneath the ruins were intercepted by soldiers with drawn swords. So vast were the piles of corpses that the lanes were blocked to the victors. (339) The enemy could not bear such a blow; those who reassembled after the battle, seeing the village strewn with dead, fled in all directions. Encouraged by his victory, Herod would have marched on Jerusalem at once if he had not been held up by a most violent storm. This prevented him from completing his success and delayed the final defeat of Antigonus, who was already planning to abandon the capital [*a*].

7. His other miraculous escape

(340) That evening Herod, still hot from the fight, dismissed his weary comrades to refresh themselves and went to take a bath like any other soldier, attended by a single slave. He was on the point of entering the bathhouse when one of the enemy, sword in hand, dashed out in front of him, followed by a second and a third and others in their wake. (341) These men had fled fully armed from the battlefield to the bathhouse where they crouched in hiding until they saw the king. Panic-stricken and trembling they ran out past him, unarmed as he was, and dashed for the exits. As it happened, no one was there to seize them. Herod was content to have come to no harm, and they all got away.

8. Advance on Jerusalem

(342) On the following day, Herod ordered the decapitation of Pappus, Antigonus' commander who had perished in the combat, and sent the head to his brother Pheroras as revenge for the murder of their brother; for it was Pappus who had killed Joseph [*a*]. (343) When the storm died down, Herod advanced upon Jerusalem and brought his army up to the walls [*b*]; it was now just three years since he had been

339[*a*] By then, in the winter of 39–38 BC, Antigonus controlled only a small portion of Judaea, i.e., some territory around Jerusalem.

342[*a*] *End of the Hasmonean rule in Judaea* Pappus' defeat swung the pendulum in Herod's favor, and only the winter prevented him from marching on Jerusalem (see 345).

343[*b*] Herod pitched his camp north of the city, as Pompey had done before him (see 145[*a*]).

344[*c*] See 241[*a*].

345[*a*] The siege of the capital began in the spring, and Sosius' legions had arrived by then.

347[*b*] *How the contemporary sages reacted to Herod* The frenzy referred to reflected the religious revival among the pro-Hasmonean forces faithful to Antigonus when they realized that this was the final stage of the death struggle between Antigonus and Herod. The inhabitants put their trust in the Temple to defend the city and not let it fall. Not everyone thought so; the more prominent Pharisee sages kept a cooler head and advised submission, as befitted God's decree. They counselled the return of Herod if only to act as "God's rod of anger" over the erring masses. The names of Rabbi Hillel and Rabbi Shammai have been suggested, but their identities and their attitudes remain debatable issues (much as these might throw light on the period in question). Both rabbis were men of independent mind who regarded Herod as an intruder, but who contemplated events philosophically: God's intentions remained hidden, and He would intervene in His own good time and judge Herod. Meanwhile (i.e., 37 BC), they and their peers did not take part in the secular dispute in favor of Antigonus, and according to *Antiquities* XV, 3–4, even advised surrendering the city to Herod. This did not identify them as pro-Herodian, and they remained true to their beliefs when they openly opposed him some thirty years later in a controversy over an oath of allegiance which he required of his subjects, and which was contrary to their principles (*Antiq.* XV, 368–371).

351[*a*] *Antiquities* XIV, 487 suggests a shorter time of three months at the most, as the first wall was breached in forty days of constant battering. (See *Antiq.* XIV, 476.) In A. Schalit's opinion the siege lasted five months, from the spring to mid-summer of 37 BC, and did not extend to the Fast of Kippur (about October).

353[*b*] Though the text refers to the citadel of the Antonia, Antigonus' last stand was made in the inner Temple courts.

353[*c*] A mocking reference to the tragic feminine figure in Sophocles' play, *Oedipus Rex*, and a ridiculing of his present weakness.

357[*a*] Antony ordered his execution at Antioch in northern Syria. The death of Antigonus spelled the end of the Hasmonean dynasty (37 BC). Its place was taken by Herod, the usurper of the Hasmonean crown. According to *Antiquities* XV, 9, Antony was persuaded to execute Antigonus at once to degrade him in the eyes of the Jews, and also to discourage his followers from attempting to arrange his escape and vindicate his right to the Judaean kingdom. "He was the first Roman who decided to behead a king," according to the historian Strabo. The Hasmonean dynasty had passed away and Herod would establish his own house on its ruins. A new era had opened in the period of the Second Temple, the era of Herod.

357[*b*] *The mystery of Antigonus' tomb* Archaeological discovery in recent years has added a mysterious epitaph to Antigonus' death, and with that, a lively speculation that has aroused considerable interest. An elaborately carved Jewish tomb accidentally came to light in the ancient Jewish necropolis sprawling over the western slopes of Mount Scopus facing Jerusalem. The tomb contained a stone ossuary, one of the finest found in the necropolis, as well as a monumental inscription, as illustrated. The inscription, written in archaic Hebrew characters (see the seven lines in the original) proclaims: "I, Abba, son of the priest Eleazer, son of Aaron the high (priest); I, Abba, an oppressed and persecuted man, native of Jerusalem, went to Babylonia and brought (the bones of) Mattathi, son of Judah, and buried him in the cave which I acquired by writ." A mystery lurks behind the return of the remains of Mattathi (Mattathias), an important and revered person, from exile (i.e. Babylon) and their burial in holy soil (the necropolis of Jerusalem). The discussion centers around the meaning of the inscription: Abba, son of the high priest (possibly a descendant of the priest Aaron) had brought back the

proclaimed king in Rome. He encamped opposite the Temple Mount, since that quarter of the city was open to attack, and it was from there that Pompey had previously captured the city. (344) After allotting various tasks to the troops, he felled the trees in the suburbs and ordered three lines of earthworks to be raised and siege towers erected on them. Leaving his most capable subordinates to supervise these works, he went off to Samaria to fetch the daughter of Alexander, son of Aristobulus, to whom he was betrothed (as referred to earlier) [*c*]. Thus he scorned the enemy by making his wedding an episode of the siege.

9. (345) When the wedding was over he returned to Jerusalem with a stronger force. Sossius also joined him [*a*] with an imposing army of horses and infantry which he had sent on by the inland route, while he himself marched through Phoenicia. (346) The combined forces totaled eleven battalions of infantry and six thousand cavalry, besides the Syrian auxiliaries who added considerably to his strength. The two commanders encamped near the north wall: Herod emboldened by the senatorial decrees appointing him king, and Sossius relying on Antony's decision to send the army under his command to support Herod.

Chapter XVIII

1. The siege of Jerusalem

(347) Considerable agitation seized the Jewish masses in the city, which expressed itself in various ways. Congregrating around the Temple, the feebler folk sought divine guidance while their spiritual leaders predicted wise "prophecies" to fit the occasion [*b*]. The more desperate went out in gangs to carry out raids, mainly to lay their hands on food supplies within reach of the city, leaving no provisions for man or beast. (348) The more disciplined military were busily employed repelling the besiegers; from the ramparts they beat off the excavators who were busy on the earthworks, and constantly contrived new devices to counter the engines. But above all they showed their superiority by digging mine shafts under the enemy.

2. Capture and massacre

(349) To stop the raiders the king devised ambushes, putting an end to their excursions. In order to solve the shortage of provisions he had supplies brought in from afar. The fighting men showed boundless courage resisting the besiegers, but the tactical skill of the Romans gave him an advantage over them. (350) Therefore, they did not hurl themselves against the Roman lines in broad daylight to face certain death, but they would suddenly appear in the midst of the enemy from their mine shafts; and before any section of the wall was battered down they would erect another in its place. In short, determined to hold out to the last, neither their actions nor their ingenuity betrayed the slightest weariness. (351) Indeed, despite the strength of the besieging army, they resisted the siege for almost five months [*a*]. Finally, some of Herod's picked men ventured to scale the wall and leaped into the city followed by Sossius' centurions. First they secured the area around the Temple; then the troops poured in and a frightful carnage followed, as the Romans were furious at the length of the siege and Herod's Jewish soldiers were determined that no opponent should survive. (352) They were massacred wholesale in the narrow alleys, as they crowded together in the houses, or as they fled to the sanctuary. No mercy was shown to infants, the aged or helpless women. Although the king rushed messengers everywhere entreating the soldiers to discriminate, no one stayed his hand; in a wild rage they vented their fury on all ages alike. (353) At this point, no longer heeding his past or present position, Antigonus came down from the citadel [*b*] and threw himself at Sossius' feet. The Roman, totally unmoved by Antigonus' change of fortune, laughed aloud, calling him Antigone [*c*]. But he did not treat him like a woman or let him go free; he put him in fetters and kept him under strict guard.

3. Herod's protection of the sanctuary

(354) Now that he had the upper hand over his opponents, Herod's first problem was to control his foreign allies: for this pagan crowd rushed to see the sanctuary and the sacred objects it contained. The king rebuked some, threatened others, and even had recourse to arms to keep them back, thinking victory more terrible than defeat if such people should set eyes on any of the objects that were forbidden to be seen. (355) At the same time he stopped the looting in the city, emphatically impressing upon Sossius that if the Romans stripped the city, of its possessions they would leave him king of a desert, and that he would regard a worldwide empire an inadequate compensation for the slaughter of so many people. (356) When Sossius replied that he was justified in letting the soldiers indulge in pillage after the strain of the siege, Herod undertook to distribute rewards to the whole army out of his own resources. Therefore, having ransomed what was left of Jerusalem, he kept his promise, rewarding each soldier handsomely, the officers in proportion, and Sossius himself magnificently.

The death of Antigonus

(357) After dedicating a golden crown to God, Sossius withdrew from Jerusalem, taking Antigonus in fetters to Antony. This man, clinging to life with forlorn hope to the very end, fell under the axe [*a*], a fitting end to his ignominious career [*b*].

bones of Mattathias, who is presumed by some scholars to be *Mattathias Antigonus*, the last Hasmonean prince who was usurped by Herod. The decorated ossuary was found well hidden under the inscription and suggests that an im important person was buried there under extraordinary circumstances. However, at the time of writing, the evidence is inconclusive.

358[*a*] Herod surmised that even after the liquidation of Antigonus, other descendants could still appear to claim the crown and gain the support of large sections of the population who were still steeped in the Hasmonean tradition. These included the wealthier classes, mostly connected with the party of the Pharisees (details on the contemporary parties in Judaea are given in *War* II, 119, 162 f., 411, 567), and the masses who regarded Herod as an imposter and an "Idumaean slave", who though no descendant of the House of David, had been imposed on the Jews through the intervention of a foreign power. This was contrary to edicts of traditional Jewish law, which in addition forbade the crowning of a proselyte such as Herod. Nor could Herod be satisfied with the support of those Pharisee sages who held that his rule was nevertheless willed by God for mysterious reasons of His own (see 347[*a*]). In any case, in *Antiquities* XV, 1, 8 Josephus claims that after the capture of Jerusalem in 37 BC Herod liquidated many members of the Sanhedrin and hosts of notables, though he spared many Pharisee leaders who hated him, but regarded him as a necessary evil in those troubled times. In fact, in an attempt to wipe out all centers of political resistance and support of Hasmonean ambitions, he had gradually established a reign of terror throughout the land. This is borne out later in Josephus' account (437[*c*]-438[*a*]).

358[*b*] See illustrations of late Hasmonean coins.

358[*c*] Herod's capture of Jerusalem, with the help of the Roman legions, put an end to the main Jewish resistance and his monarchy became an established fact. It was basically a creation of Rome's eastern policy; its form and scope were determined by the calculations and needs of the Roman rulers — first Antony, and subsequently Augustus.

361[*a*] *Eleutherus,* modern Nahr-el-Kebir in Syria, north of Tripoli.

361[*b*] The most important harbor towns in southern Syria, which were bigger morsels than she could bite.

362[*c*] *Antony's territorial gifts to Cleopatra in Palestine* It is instructive to compare the background history of Cleopatra, Antony and Herod as known to Josephus, on the one hand, and its interpretation by Plutarch, Dio Cassius, even Shakespeare or the Hollywood movies, on the other. As a result of Cleopatra's claims, several towns in the coastal strip and in the Jordan Valley were excluded from Herod's kingdom, although the actual rule over the rich Jericho valley and its palm and balsam groves still remained in his hands when he undertook to pay her a rental of two hundred talents annually. M. Stern believes that these territorial gifts were given to Cleopatra in two stages: In the first stage (36 BC). Jericho was taken, while the coastal towns Joppa and Gaza were cut off from his kingdom in 34 BC Herod was also required, on behalf of Cleopatra, to collect the annual rent due from the Nabataean Malichus for the lands separated from his kingdom in the same manner, eventually involving him in a conflict with Herod (see 364[*a*]). As to the image of Cleopatra, she was not as beautiful as she was later envisaged (more like the image portrayed on her coins and cameos), but her extraordinary personality fascinated her Egyptian and Greek subjects no less than her Roman admirers. She symbolized Isis in Egyptian eyes, and Aphrodite in Greek eyes. When Julius Caesar first met her she was in her early twenties and he was fifty-three, but she knew how to charm and she had a son by Caesar, called Caesarion. She was thirty when she met the forty-year old Antony. Other more reliable Roman sources indicate that she was very popular with the native Egyptians though she was of Greek blood. She also spoke their language. The keynote to her character was not sex, but ambition. The essence of her nature was a combination of female charm and a masculine brain, both bent on the pursuit of power. In fact, apart from sex this was the overriding reason for her relations with Caesar and Antony; if she wanted power, she could gain it only through the Roman governors of the East. The evil spoken of her by Josephus may have been taken from his main source on Herod, the gentile historian Nicolaus of Damascus, who had gone over to Cleopatra's enemy, Herod, and represented opinions held in his court. After Antony and Octavian had divided the Roman Empire between them, he married Cleopatra and crowned her nominal queen of the eastern Roman Empire. After she bore him two sons he gave her Cyprus, Armenia, some areas in Crete, Lebanon and the Euphrates valley. However, Antony refused to grant her any areas belonging to his staunch friend Herod. Cleopatra hoped to divide her empire among her sons. But the warring parties at Actium included not only the other two Republican triumvirs,

4. Herod's liquidation of Antigonus' partisans

(358) Herod discriminated between both classes of the city's population; he bestowed honors and recognition upon those who had taken his side, thereby enhancing their attachment, while he liquidated the supporters of Antigonus [*a*]. Since his treasury was running dry, he turned all his valuables into money [*b*], which he sent to Antony and his entourage [*c*].

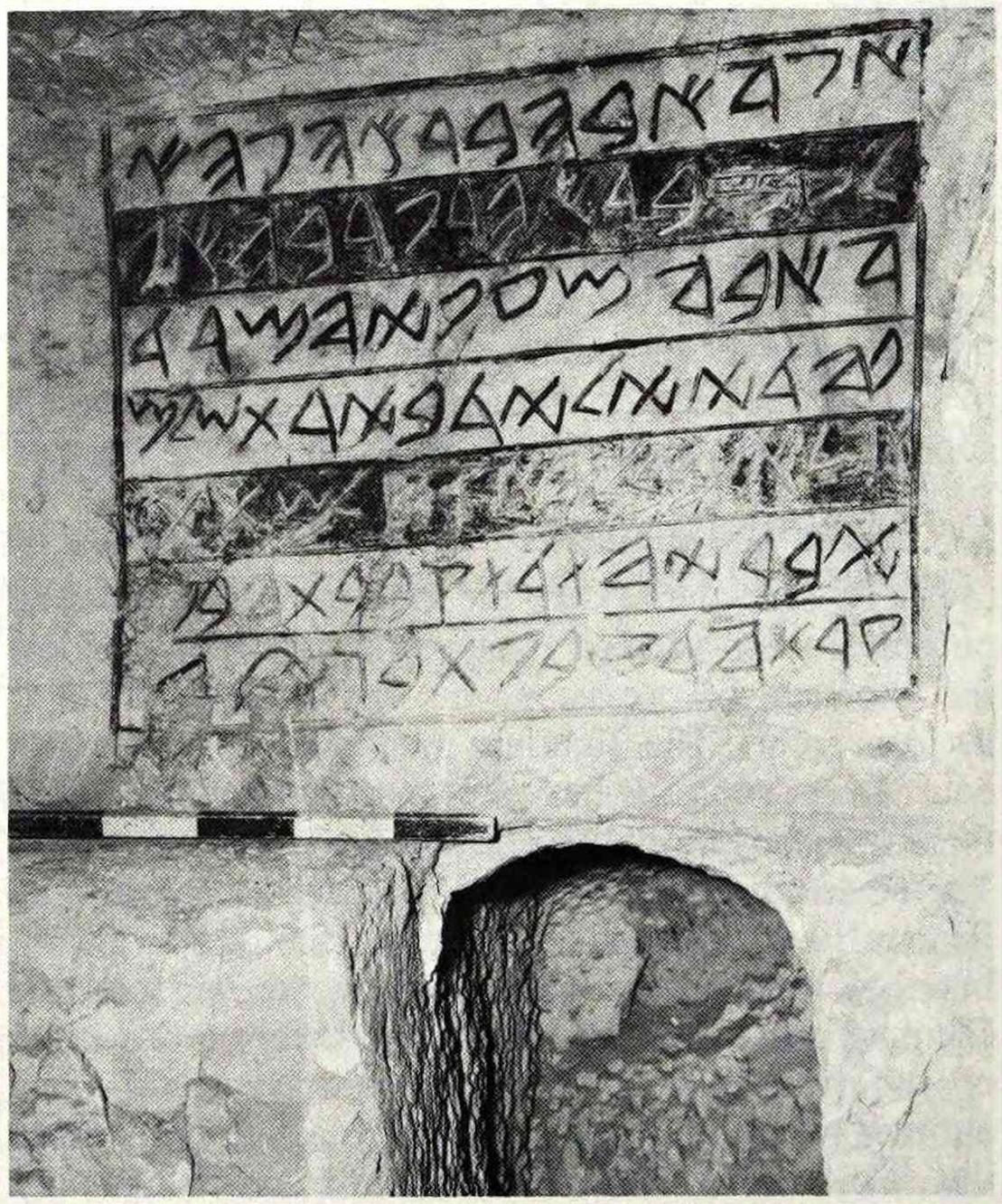
Cleopatra's ambitions and Antony's mad love

(359) Even of this price he could not buy freedom from further trouble. Antony, bewitched by his love for Cleopatra, had become a slave to his passion. After doing away with all her family she thirsted for the blood of strangers. (360) Maliciously slandering high dignitaries in Syria, she urged Antony to execute them, believing that she would thus remove any obstacles to appropriating their possessions. Extending her acquisitiveness to the rulers of Judaea and Arabia, she secretly schemed to execute their kings, Herod and Malichus.

5. Cleopatra's exactions from Herod

(361) Antony yielded only in part to her demands, but he soberly refrained from the sacrilege of taking the lives of good men and eminent kings. However, he did put an end to his friendship with them. He expropriated several large tracts of their territories—in particular the palm groves of Jericho where balsam is grown—and presented them to Cleopatra, along with the cities south of the river Eleutherus [*a*], with the exception of Tyre and Sidon [*b*]. (362) Now mistress

Tomb, excavated in the ancient Jewish necropolis on Mount Scopus, possibly the tomb of Antigonus. (See commentary 357[b].)



of all this domain [*c*], she escorted Antony to the Euphrates on his way to fight the Parthians, and then entered Judaea by way of Apamaea and Damascus. Herod placated her hostility by offering costly gifts, and for an annual rental of two hundred talents he leased back from her the lands that had been expropriated from his territory. He then escorted her to Pelusium [*d*] with every mark of respect. (363) Antony returned from Parthia shortly after, bringing Cleopatra a present—his prisoner Artabazes, the son of Tigranes [*e*]; then he bestowed upon her the Parthian, together with the money and all the booty.

Chapter XIX

1. Herod's war with the Arabs

(364) When the war that ended at Actium [*a*] first broke out, Herod prepared to take the field with Antony after having disposed of the disturbances in Judaea and capturing the fortress of Hyrcania, held till then by the sister of Antigonus. (365) But Cleopatra cunningly thwarted him from sharing Antony's dangers. As stated [*b*], she was scheming against the kings and persuaded Antony to entrust the war against the Arabs [*c*] to Herod: if he succeeded, she would be mistress of Arabia; if he failed, of Judaea. She therefore hoped that one of the rulers would overthrow the other.

2. Defeat at Canatha

(366) It was Herod, however, who benefited by her scheme. He began by raiding enemy territory and

but Rome and the Queen of Egypt; for when it was discovered in Rome that Antony had willed Cleopatra all the eastern Roman Empire should he die, the Romans sensed the danger, canceled all Antony's prerogatives emanating from the triumvirate, reduced him to the rank of a private citizen, and declared war on both him and Cleopatra. After Octavian defeated the Roman-Egyptian fleet at Actium (31 BC), Cleopatra could survive only by her wits. Octavian promised her clemency if she would poison Antony and hand over her ancestral Ptolemaic treasures. She tried to burn them, but was foiled and went on a hunger strike. Though it seemed that Octavian yielded, Cleopatra knew better and committed suicide. Her son Caesarion was murdered, and Egypt became Rome's breadbasket and winter resort.

362[*d*] *Pelusium* On the Egyptian border, west of the present Suez Canal.

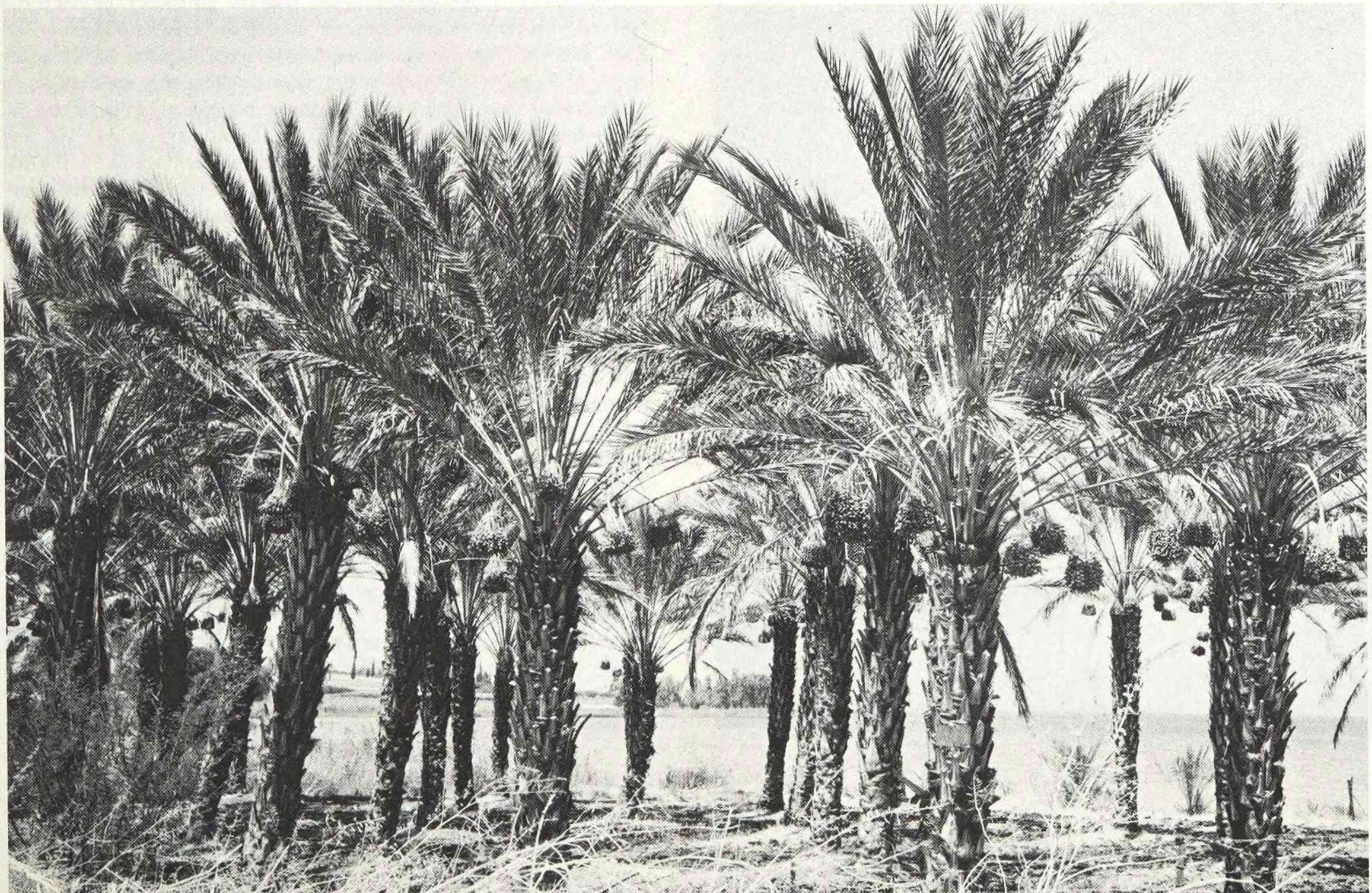
363[*e*] The king in question was not a Parthian, but Artavasades, an Armenian ruler who had fought his Median (Parthian) namesake along with Antony, then deserted him and was taken captive to Syria. Josephus' sources had apparently confused the two namesakes.

364[*a*] When Antony broke with Octavian and the latter defeated both him and Cleopatra in the naval battle off Actium in Greece (31 BC); Egypt was then absorbed into the empire as a Roman province.

365[*b*] Cleopatra did not want Herod to help Antony; she feared that the latter would feel obliged to Herod thereafter, and had him sent to fight the Nabateans (see 362).

365[*c*] *The Nabateans* Recent archeological discovery has resolved much of the mystery surrounding this highly civilized people of the desert. Their origin is Arabian, and their culture is characterized by Aramaic features, including their adoption of the Aramean script, very similar to the ancient Hebrew. A. Negev distinguished three phases in the annals of the Nabateans: The first period, covering the early third to the second century BC, represents the semi-nomadic period of their early settlement in North Arabia, Sinai, the southern reaches of Palestine (the Negev), and Transjordan; but the Nabateans left no visible remains and had little contact with the Hellenistic centers. The earliest historical reference by Greek historians is that of Diodorus Siculus in 312 BC. The second period (first century BC to mid-first century AD), witnessed the expansion of their vast domain, and international economic activity throughout the Negev of Palestine, Transjordan and the East when their impact is recorded by the Roman historian Strabo and Josephus' works, mentioned in our text. This phase began roughly with Alexander Jannaeus' conquest of Gaza (see 87[*e*]), the revival of Nabatean habitation in their old desert stations, and the erection of new imposing centers, of

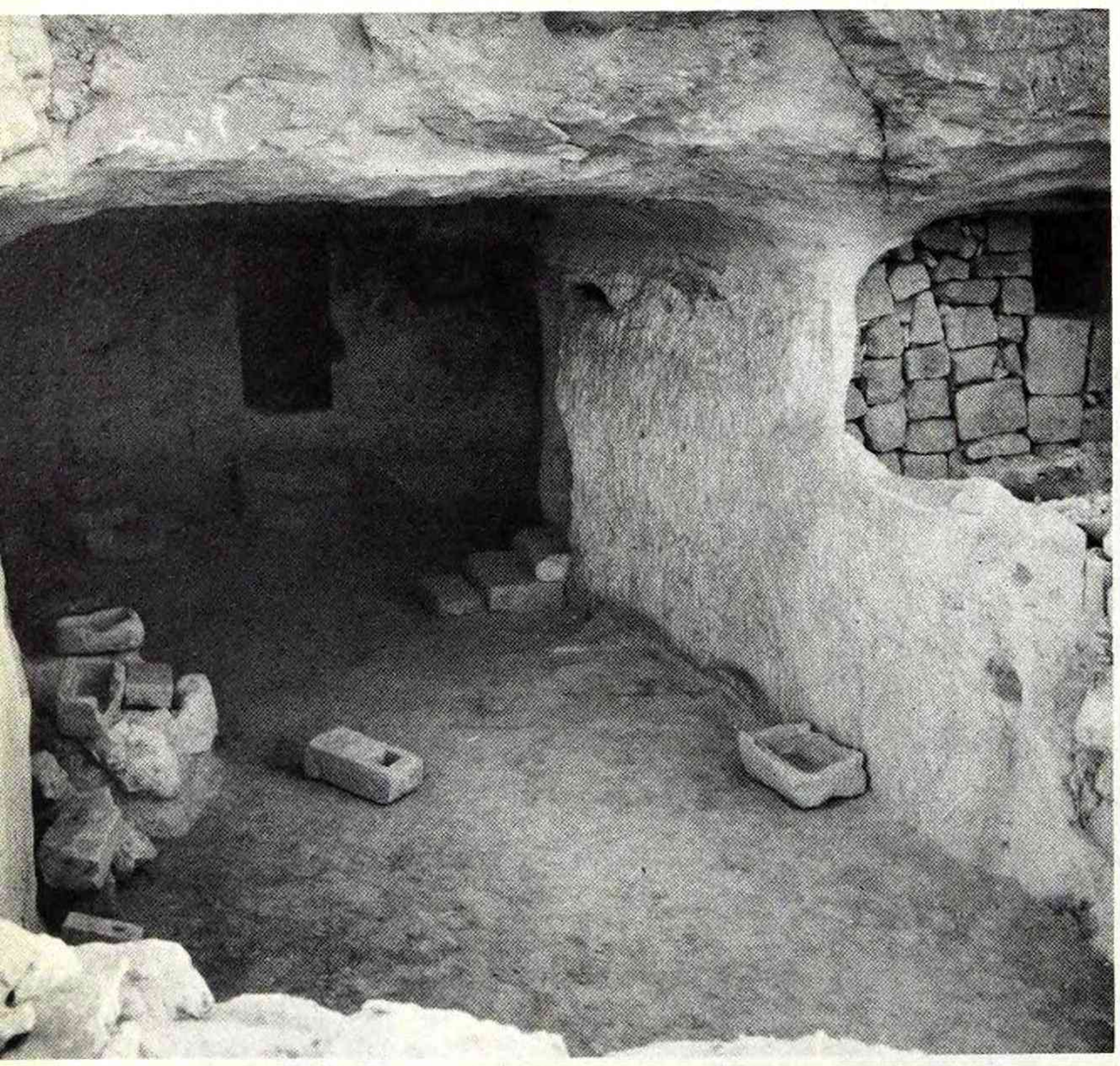
The palm groves of Jericho



A Nabatean on his camel

assembling a large force of cavalry which he set against the enemy near Diospolis [*a*] and defeating them despite their stubborn resistance. This defeat occasioned great activity among the Arabs who gathered in vast numbers at Canatha [*b*] in Coele–Syria to await the Jews there. (367) When Herod arrived with his army he endeavored to conduct his operations with caution and ordered the camp to be fortified. However, the command was disregarded by the rank and file. Flushed with their earlier victory, they rushed upon the Arabs, routed them with their first charge and followed in pursuit. In the pursuit Herod fell into a trap. Athenion, one of Cleopatra's generals who had always been his adversary, let the natives of Canatha loose to fight him. (368) The combined onslaught restored the morale of the Arabs, who turned about to face the Jews with renewed spirit. After uniting their forces on rocky, difficult ground [*c*], Herod's troops, slaughtered them indiscriminately. Those who escaped from the battle sought shelter in Ormiza, but their camp and its defenders were surrounded and captured by the Arabs.

The Nabateans built their rock dwellings in Avdat



which the remains of some of them are familiar to us (as illustrated). The impact of these Nabatean centers was felt from Egypt to Palestine, Transjordan and beyond, until AD 80. From the moment Herod became king of Judaea, he adopted an aggressive policy towards the Nabatean neighbors. Open warfare started in 31 BC when the Nabatean king refused to pay his debts to Cleopatra (see 362). The war was waged mainly in Transjordan, in the year when the fate of the Roman Empire was being decided in the struggle between Mark Antony and Octavian. They took a very active part in the Arabian-Indian spice trade; their caravans plied the ancient commercial routes from India to Egypt, and expanded to the eastern Mediterranean and the Roman world through maritime commerce. The late period of Nabatean history began after the destruction of Nabatean towns and stations by Arabian tribes, and their reconstruction, further expansion and renewed prosperity, as evidenced by their imposing remains (el-Heger in Arabia; Khirbet et-Tannur, er-Ram, Petra in Transjordan; Kurnub, Mampsis, Subeita, Avdat in the Negev of Palestine). This era began approximately after the destruction of the Jewish state; King Rabal II regained possession of the Negev, but the Nabatean kingdom was annexed by the Romans in AD 106 and amalgamated into the southern Roman province of "Arabia" in the first half of the second century AD. Its flourishing international trade continued unabated for another century, then gradually disappeared by the third century. "The antagonism between Herod and the Nabatean kingdom runs like a thread throughout the annals of his reign; it constitutes a continuation of the Jewish-Nabatean struggle which had commenced in the days of Alexander Jannaeus. Although friendly relations had formerly prevailed between Antipater and the Nabateans, they had deteriorated at the time of Herod's flight from Antigonus, and more important still, when Herod became king of Judaea, he inherited the political aims and interests of the Judaean sovereigns who had preceded him." (M. Stern, *The Jewish People*, p. 233).

366[*a*] *Diospolis*—Lod, in central Judaea, now the site of Israel's Ben Gurion airport.

366[*b*] *Canatha*—Kanawat, east of Damascus and on the eastern border of Coele-Syria.

368[*c*] The lava-strewn district of Leja, now inhabited by the Druse.

369[*a*] It is worth noting that Herod suffered defeat when he fought far away from Judaea, on Nabatean ground. For a time, he was forced to refrain from open battle and restricted himself to hit-and-run raids and forays in the areas under Nabatean rule.

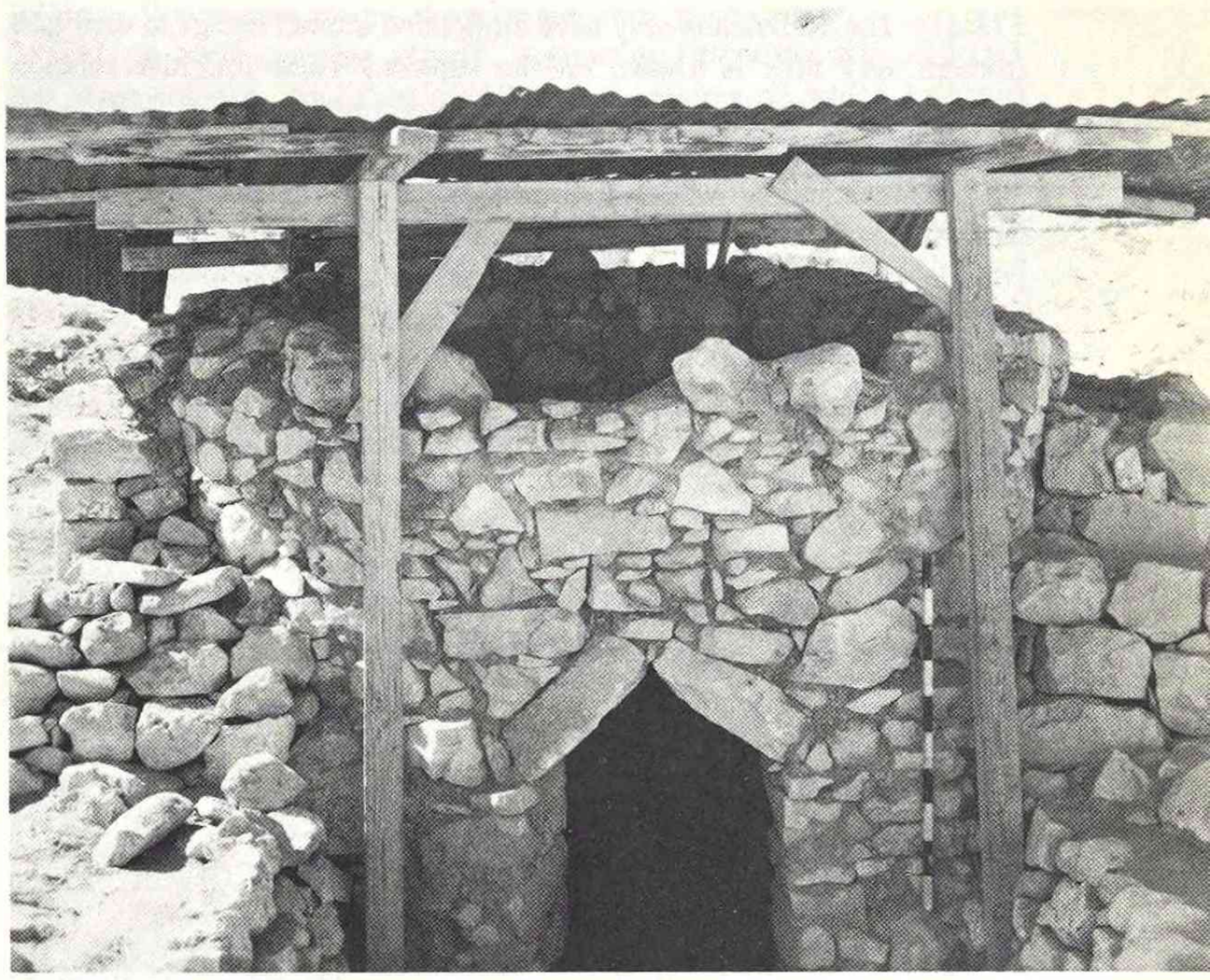
370[*b*] 31 BC.

3. The Arab (Nabatean) invasion, and earthquake of 31 BC

(369) Shortly after this disaster, Herod returned with new reinforcements but he was too late. The responsibility for this calamity was due to the insubordination of the divisional commanders; had they not joined battle prematurely, Athenion would not have found an opportunity for his stratagem. However, Herod subsequently got even by constantly raiding Arab territory [*a*] so that they had frequent occasion to recall regretfully their one victory. (370) But while he was punishing his enemies, another disaster befell him—this time an act of God which occurred in the seventh year of his reign, when the war at Actium was at its height [*b*]; an earthquake in the early spring destroyed countless cattle and thirty thousand people. The army escaped injury as it was quartered in the open. (371) At once, Arab confidence was stimulated by rumors which always make disasters appear worse than they are. Convinced that all of Judaea was ruined and that all they had to do was to take over an abandoned country, they invaded Judaea with much alacrity, after killing the Jewish envoys, who had been sent to them. (372) The people were so distressed by this invasion and so demoralized by the magnitude of this succession of disasters, that Herod called them together and tried to rouse their spirit of resistance by the following words:

4. Herod's eloquent speech

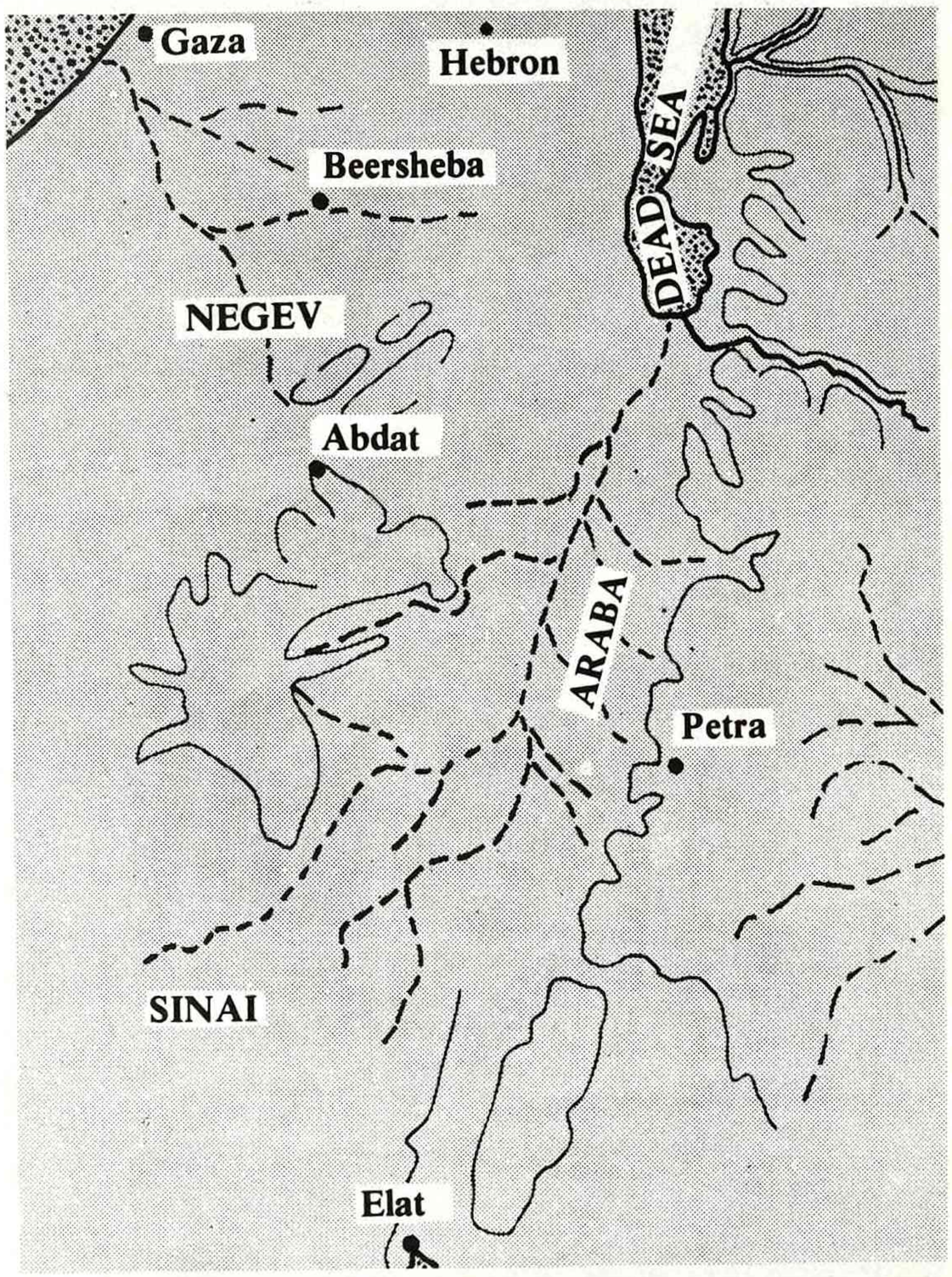
(373) "It is most unreasonable to take fright as you did. It is natural to be dismayed by an act of God, but to be equally despondent when attacked by human enemies is cowardly. I, for one, far from being alarmed because the enemy has invaded us following the earthquake, regard it as a snare which God has placed to trap the Arabs and make them pay the penalty for what they have done. It was not so much their own weapons and strength, but our accidental misfortune that gave them confidence to come here. It is a poor hope which depends less on one's own ability than on other people's misfortunes. (374) Moreover, fortune is never permanently either adverse or favorable with mankind; one can see how fickle fortune is. You can appreciate this from your own experiences: you were victorious in the first battle, your enemies won the second; and, now, probably, your enemies, expecting to win, will now be defeated. Remember that cocksureness throws men off their guard, whereas fear teaches caution; so your apprehension gives me reassurance. (375) When you were too bold and, rejecting my instructions, dashed out upon the enemy, Athenion got his opportunity for a stratagem; but, now, your hesitation and apparent irresolution give me certainty of victory. (376) It is quite understandable that you should feel this way waiting for the battle to begin. This, however is an appropriate attitude while waiting for an impending bat-



A Nabatean kiln

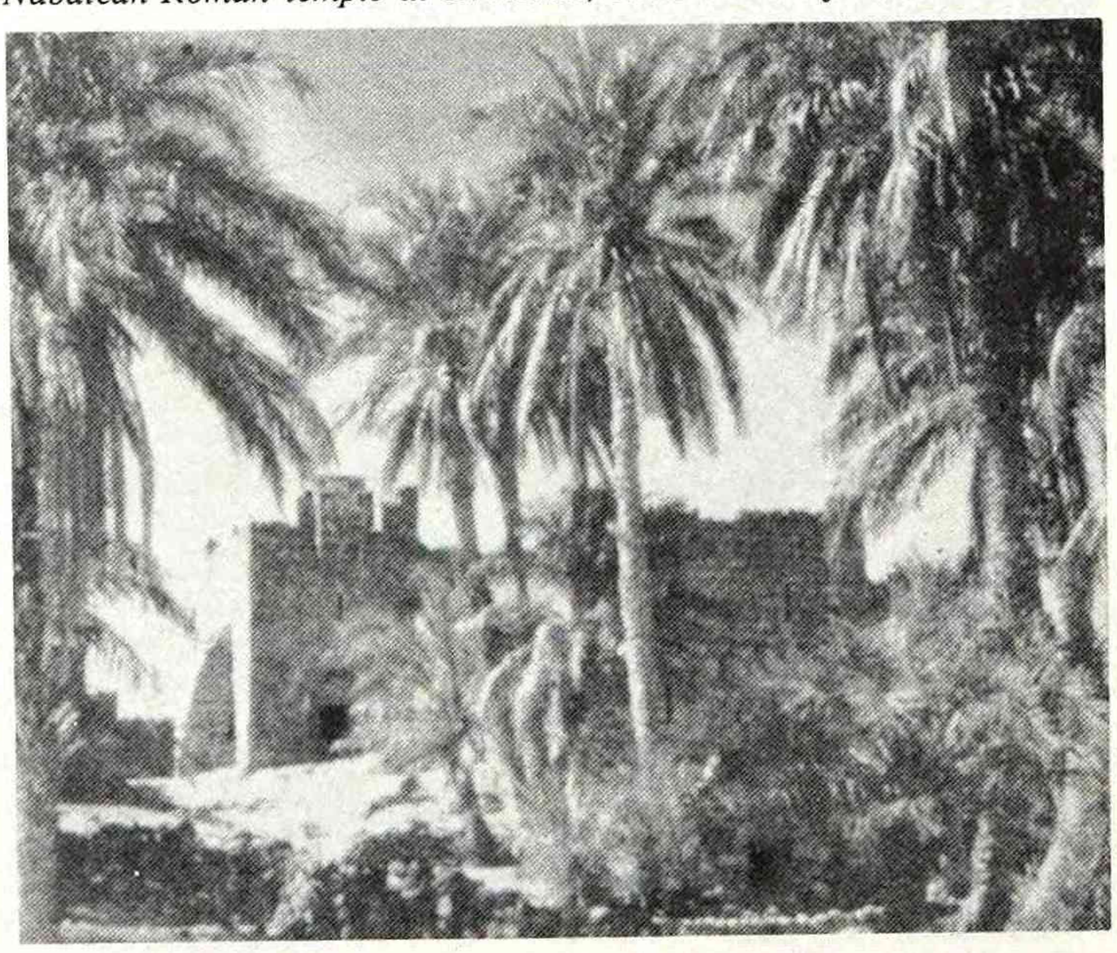
Avdat was one of the Nabatean cities of the Negev, situated along the intercontinental trade route from Egypt to Palestine and Transjordan

378[*a*] The Nabateans may have immolated human beings to their god (though very little is known on the subject.) Their primitive religion seems to recall the harsh desert customs described in biblical tales, such as the immolation of Agag the Amalekite at Gilgal (I. Sam. 15).
380[*a*] Josephus provides a different speech in *Antiquities* XV, 127–146, with echoes of classical Greek rhetoric; but both versions of Josephus contain similar themes of hope for victory, with the help of God, and harsh condemnation of the Nabateans' ritual atrocity.
380[*b*] *Philadelphia*–modern Amman.
381[*c*] This is the Greek rendering. It may be Herthem in Nabatean.
381[*d*] A walled camp and the fort on a hill were part of a fortified Nabatean position near Philadelphia.



The Negev of the Nabateans

Nabatean-Roman temple at El-Azrak, eastern Transjordan



tle; when it does happen you must be roused and show those clods that no disaster, whether inflicted by God or man, will ever dampen the fighting spirit of Jews. As long as they have breath in their bodies, not one of them will stand by while an Arab rules over his property, especially, one whom he repeatedly almost made prisoner. (377) Do not be demoralized by the convulsions of inanimate nature, or imagine that the earthquake warns us of another disaster to follow. These elemental disturbances are subject to physical causes and do man no harm beyond their immediate damage. Pestilence, famine and earthquake may possibly be foreshadowed by some slighter forewarning, but these catastrophes do not generally go beyond their natural limits and their effects are instantaneous. Moreover, could we suffer more through being defeated by our enemies than we did from the earthquake? (378) On the other hand, our enemies have a grave portent of impending disaster from a recent incident, which is attributable neither to natural causes nor to the action of someone else. In defiance of the universal law of mankind, they have brutally murdered our envoys; such are the garlanded victims they have offered to God to ensure their victory [*a*]. But they will not escape his all-seeing eye nor his invincible right-arm; and they will soon pay for their crimes if we reveal something of the spirit of our ancestors and arise to avenge such a violation of treaties. (379) Let each of us take up arms, to champion, not his wife, children or his threatened country, but to avenge our murdered envoys. It is they who will lead us, and I, myself shall be in the forefront of the battle, sensing your obedience and determination at my back. You well know that your gallantry is irresistible, if you do not bring some injury upon yourselves through some reckless action."

5. Herod's victory over the Arabs at Philadelphia

(380) Having revived his men by this speech [*a*] and observing their ardor, Herod offered a sacrifice to God, and then crossed the Jordan with his army.

Pitching his camp in the neighborhood of Philadelphia [*b*] close to the enemy, and anxious to join battle, he began skirmishing with them for a fort which lay between the opposing lines. (381) The enemy had sent out detachments to seize this post, but Herod's men quickly beat them off and secured the hill. Herod marched out his troops deployed for battle, daily, challenging the Arabs to combat. As no one came forward to oppose him—for terror had not only seized them, but even more than the men, their general Elthemus [*c*] who was paralyzed with fear—Herod advanced and proceeded to destroy their palisades [*d*]. (382) They had no choice but to emerge for action, in disorderly fashion, infantry and cavalry intermingled; though they were superior to the Jews in numbers, they could not match them in valor. Despairing of success, even they displayed reckless courage.

6. (383) As long as the Arabs stood their ground, their casualties were slight; but when they turned their backs multitudes were killed by the Jews, and many others were trampled to death by their own men. Five thousand fell in the rout; the remainder lost no time in entrenching themselves within their camp walls. Surrounded and besieged by Herod, they would have succumbed to an assault—had they not been forced to capitulate due to failure of their water supply and thirst [*a*]. They sent their envoys to Herod. (384) The king received them with contempt and even though they offered a ransom of five hundred talents, he only intensified his attacks. Parched with thirst, the Arabs came out in hordes and voluntarily surrendered to the Jews; within five days four thousand were prisoners. On the sixth day, the last remnant came out in desperation to give battle. Herod engaged them again, killing some seven thousand more. (385) As a result of this overwhelming blow he not only punished Arabia and broke the spirit of its people, but also enhanced his reputation to such an extent that they chose him as their protector [*b*].

Left and below:
Nabatean goddesses: Stone carvings from the temple at Khirbet-al-Tannur, Transjordan

383[*a*] Water was stored in wells but they were distant.

385[*b*] A corresponding account is given in *Antiquities* XV, 123-160, but some scholars doubt the veracity of the source on which Josephus drew in speaking of Herod as "protector" of the Nabateans. The precise meaning of the term is obscure. Josephus may have misunderstood a technical term of Hellenistic political usage. The Nabateans had suffered total defeat and were at his mercy. A. Momigliano believes that when Herod defeated the Egyptian commander Athenion (see 369), he seized the occasion, while the Egyptians' attention was turned elsewhere, to impose a kind of protectorate over the Nabateans of Transjordan. The victory over the Nabateans at Philadelphia had several important consequences. Herod had overcome one of the most serious crises he had ever faced. He had proved irrefutably his ability as a military commander. At the same time, he revealed the military potential of his kingdom of Judaea, and established its superiority over the Nabateans. The victory and its consequences so impressed Octavian that, after he defeated Antony, it influenced his decisions regarding Herod.

Rock carving of Nabatean hunter

386[*a*] See 362[*c*].

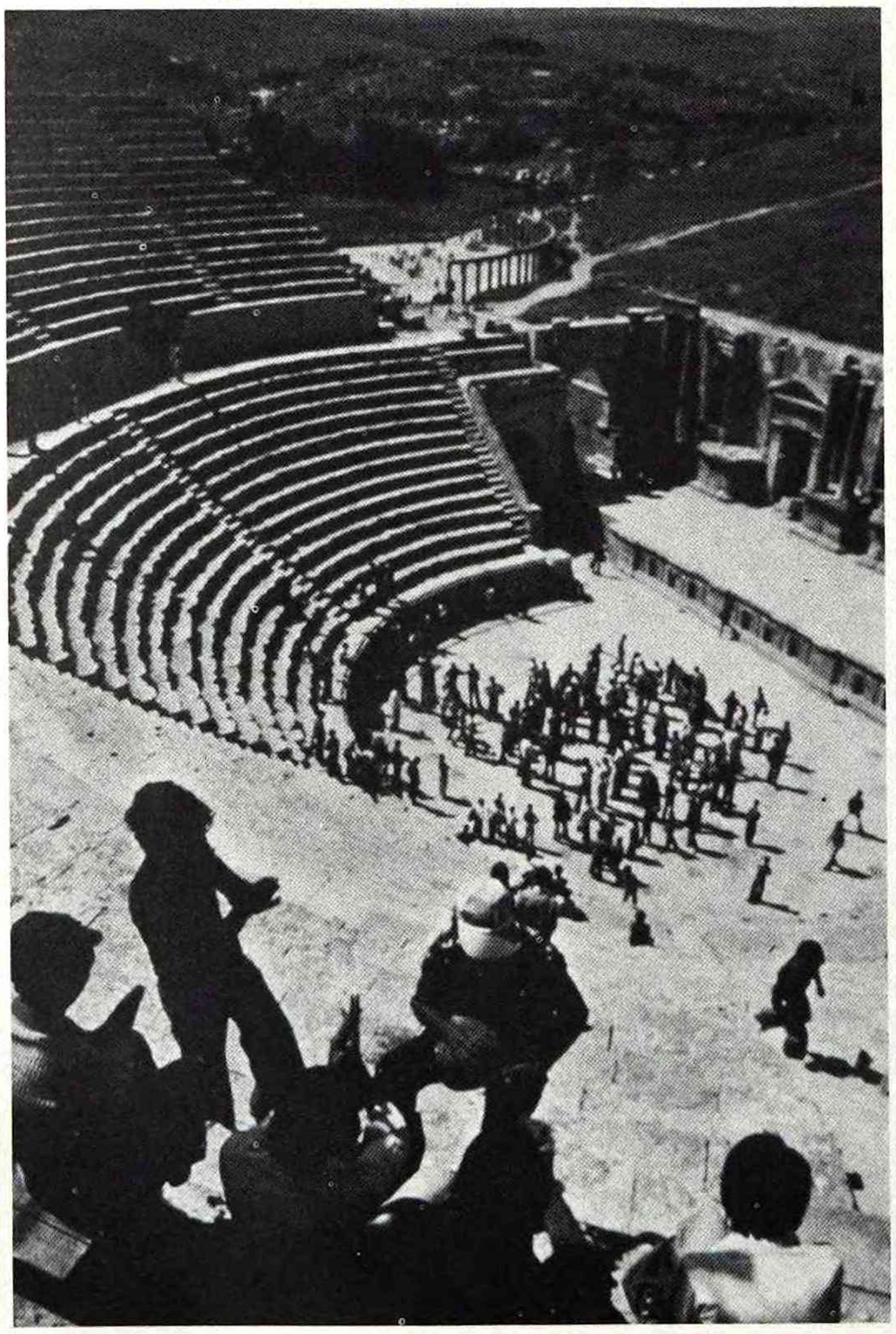
386[*b*] This statement is not repeated in *Antiquities* but it nevertheless reflects in part a serious worry and consideration for Herod. He felt that Octavian would not let him forget Antigonus' death and the elimination of the Hasmonean monarchy; however, his ruthless and suspicious character was wholly consonant to these pitiless acts. We will see (433) under what circumstances Hyrcanus, the last of the Hasmoneans, found his death. On the other hand, he decided that his only means of political survival lay in siding with the winning party in Rome, namely, Octavian. This would help to explain the nature of his sophistry which he directed towards Octavian.

387[*c*] See illustration of a commoner's dress in Roman times.

388[*d*] Herod's war with the Nabateans gave him an advantage over Octavian. He could take no part in the actual fighting at Actium against Octavian since he was occupied with the Nabateans; thus he was restricted in sending money and provisions to Antony.

391[*a*] Octavian not only forgave Herod but other eastern rulers who had been involved in Antony's rule—and this for sound administrative reasons. Josephus' account at this point omits other characteristics of the craftiness and cruelty which was part of Herod's character. In *Antiq.* XV, 165-78, he related, on his confrontation with Octavian, that he wanted to be certain that no remaining Hasmonean pretender would appear to nullify the royal claims of his dynasty—as Judaea could not exist, in Herod's opinion, under any rule but theirs. As a result of several very shady maneuvers, the high priest, Hyrcanus, (see 433) was killed and thus was eliminated the last effective danger to his accession in Judaea.

Remains of the Roman amphitheater (left) and temple (right) at Amman (Philadelphia), Transjordan

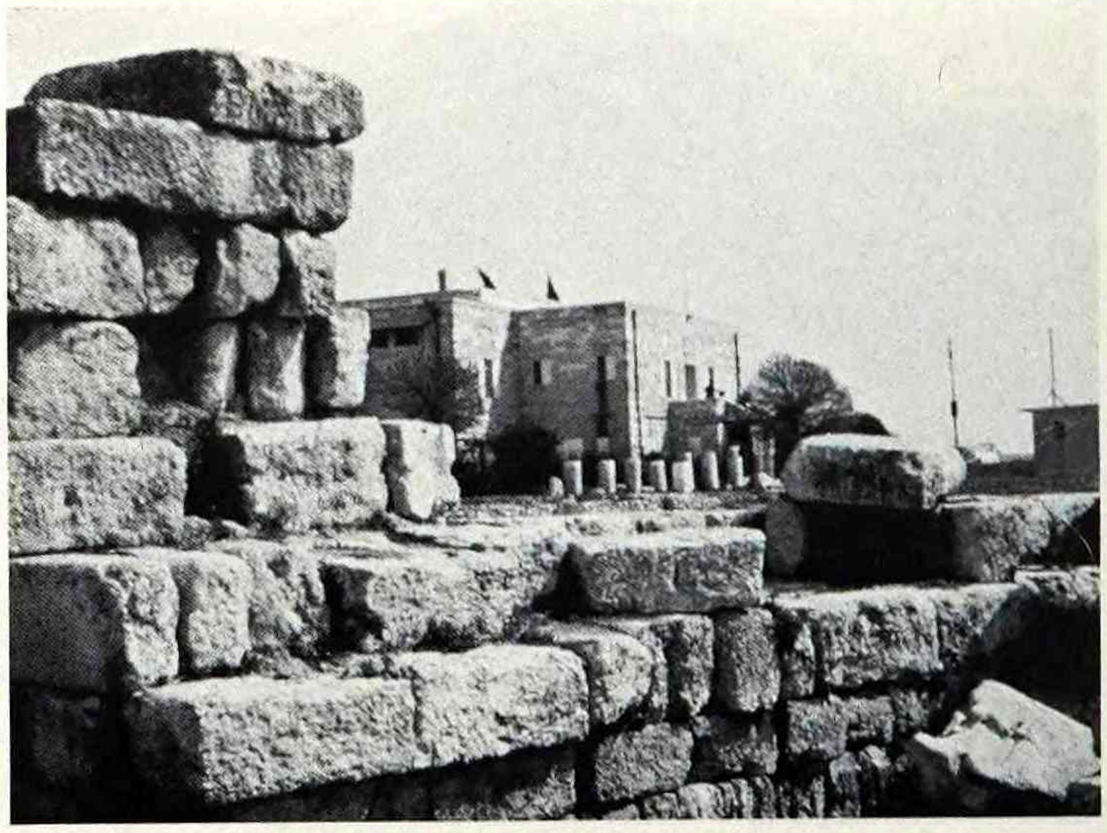


Chapter XX

1. Herods's new political orientation after Actium

(386) However, that difficulty was barely overcome when Herod's security was undermined once again, causing him considerable anxiety—because of his friendship with Antony, who had been defeated by Caesar at Actium [*a*]. (Actually, Herod had more cause for alarm than he felt, since Caesar Octavian considered his victory incomplete as long as Herod remained an ally of Antony) [*b*]. (387) The king was determined, nevertheless, to confront his danger, and, sailing to Rhodes where Caesar was then staying, he appeared before him without wearing his diadem, in the dress and appearance of a commoner [*c*], but with the proud bearing of a king. His speech was direct; he concealed nothing.

(388) "Caesar," he said, "it was Antony who made me king and I admit that I rendered to him every possible service. I will not hesitate to say that if I had not been detained by the Arabs [*d*], you would certainly have found me fighting by his side. As it was, I sent him all the auxiliary troops I could and many thousand measures of grain. I did not desert my benefactor even after his defeat at Actium [*d*]. (389) However, when I could no longer be useful as an ally, I gave him the best possible advice. I told him that the sole remedy for his disaster was the death of Cleopatra. Would he but kill her, I promised him money, protecting walls, an army and my active participation in the war against you. (390) Howbeit, his ears remained deaf through his passion for Cleopatra and through God, who has granted you the victory. I am defeated with Antony and with his fall I lay down my crown. I have come to you, basing my hope of safety upon my integrity, and presume that you will ask yourself not whose friend, but how loyal a friend, I have been!"



D. HEROD, KING OF THE JEWS

2. Herod confirmed as king

(391) Caesar replied: "You may rest assured of your safety and reign now more securely. A champion of the claims of friendship such as you deserves to rule over many subjects [*a*]. Try to remain as loyal to those who enjoy better success; for my part, I have the brightest hopes for your bold spirit. It is fortunate that Antony obeyed Cleopatra's commands rather than yours: (392) through his folly, we have gained you. It seems however that you have already rendered me a service: Quintus Didius writes me that you sent a force to assist him against the gladiators [*b*]. Therefore, I am confirming you in your kingdom by decree and will endeavor to show you some further favor, in order that you may not suffer through the loss of Antony."

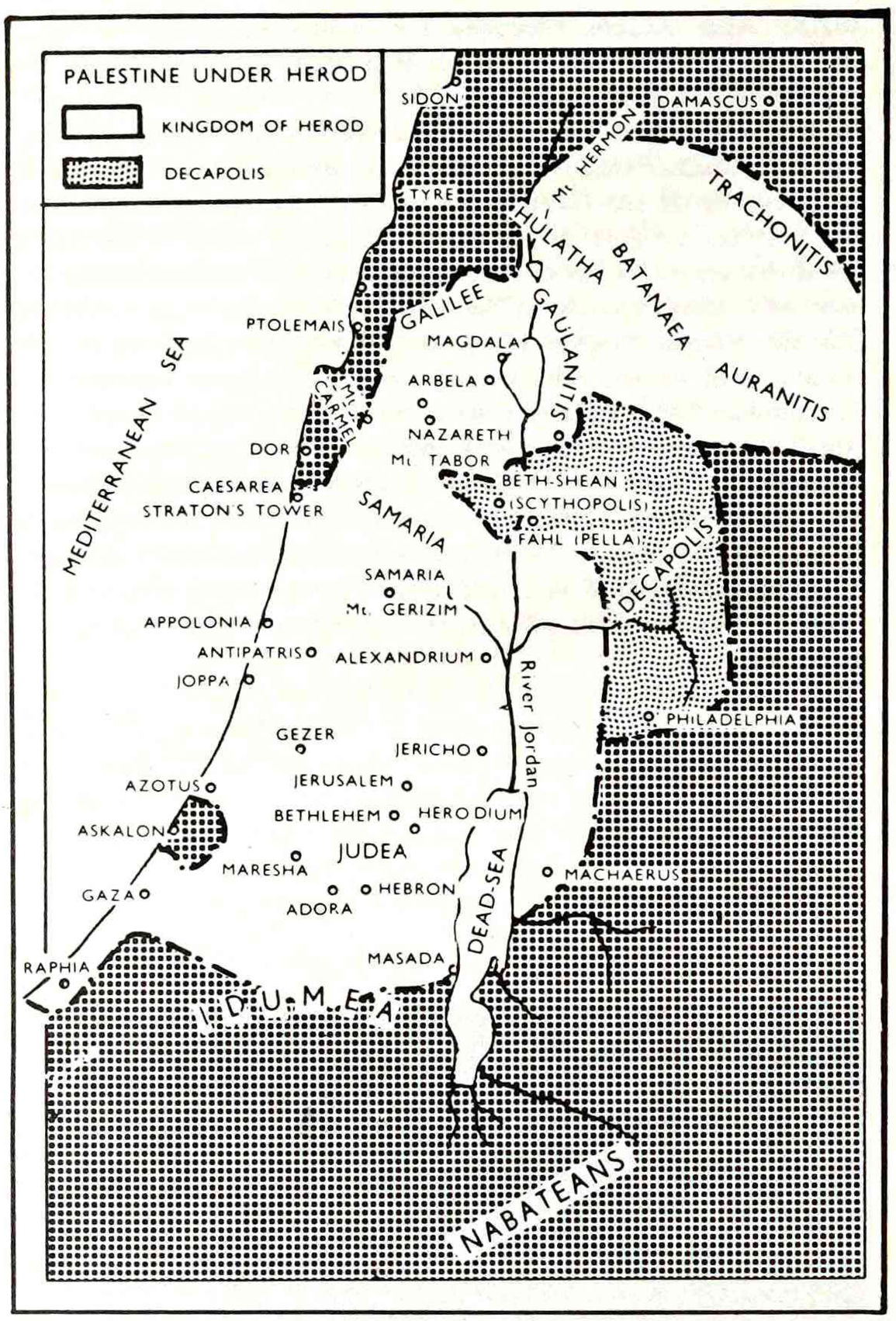
3. (393) After this gracious address to the king, he placed the crown on Herod's head and publicly proclaimed this award by a decree whereby he generously expressed his praise of the honored man [*a*]. After placating Caesar with presents, Herod tried to intercede on behalf of Alexas, one of Antony's friends, who had come to sue for mercy. However, Caesar's resentment prevailed; with bitter reproaches, the emperor condemned him and rejected Herod's appeal. (394) Later when Caesar travelled through Syria on his way to Egypt, Herod welcomed him for the first time with all the resources of his kingly wealth. He rode by his side when he inspected the army near Ptolemais and entertained him and all his friends at a banquet, following this up by providing generously for the good cheer of the rest of the army.

Romans in commoners' dress on their way to a sacrificial ceremony

392[*b*] After Actium, Cleopatra had summoned to her aid some gladiators to rush to their master's help in Egypt. They were trained for violence and loyal to Antony.

393[*a*] *His position within the Roman Empire* The overall stabilization in the Mediterranean region within Augustus' empire and the end of the threats by the last Hasmoneans, that had endangered Herod's position and the integrity of his realm during the days of Cleopatra, introduced the golden age of Herod's reign. His rule was one of the most impressive demonstrations of the new order Augustus had introduced into the Roman Empire. Moreover, Herod's kingdom, which had covered all of western Palestine had been enriched by new territories in Transjordan, Coele-Syria, and by coastal cities with the exception of Ascalon (modern-day Ashkelon) and the Phoenician coast north of Mount Carmel (see map). In other words, the Judaean kingdom covered most of the area ruled by the Hasmonean kings in their days of glory. It expanded no further after 20 BC. Augustus also gave Herod a free hand in the internal affairs of his kingdom, and he had sovereign rule over the lives and property of his subjects. His subsequent abuses of power will be related below.

Augustus Caesar (Octavian)



Expansion of Herod's kingdom

(395) He then took good care to supply water in abundance when the troops marched to Pelusium across the arid desert and back [*a*] and to ensure that the army lacked nothing in the way of supplies. Caesar and his army realized that Herod's kingdom was far too small in view of the generosity and services he had rendered. (396) Consequently, when Caesar arrived in Egypt after Antony's and Cleopatra's death, he not only conferred new honors upon him, but also restored to his kingdom the territory which Cleopatra had appropriated [*b*] with the addition of Gadara, Hippos [*c*] and Samaria, and the coastal cities of Gaza, Anthedon, Joppa and Strato's Tower. (397) He also made him a present of four hundred Gauls [*d*] to be his body-guard who had formerly been Cleopatra's. There seemed to be no more potent motivation for all this liberality of the emperor than the generous spirit of the recipient.

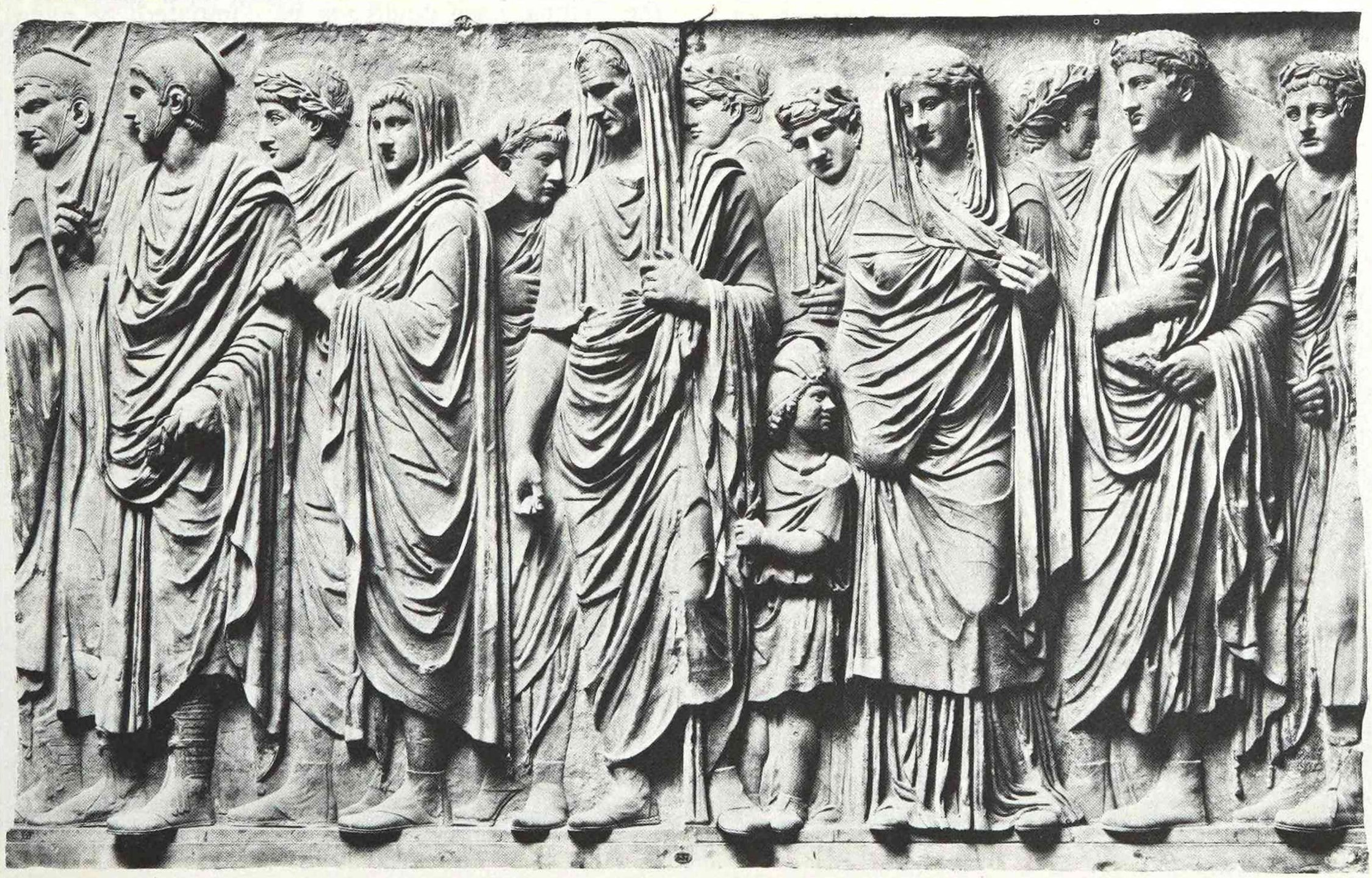
4. (398) After the first period of the Actian era [*a*], Caesar added to Herod's kingdom the district called Trachonitis and the adjacent Batanaea and Auranitis [*b*]. The reason for these gifts was the following: Zenodorus, who had leased the domain of Lysanias [*c*], was constantly sending brigands from Trachonitis to waylay the people of Damascus. These people fled to the governor of Syria, Varro, and asked that their

Left: Judaea (Palestine) under Herod

distress be reported to Caesar. When informed of the matter, Caesar sent back orders to eliminate the brigands. (399) Thereupon, Varro led out his troops, purged the land of these men and dismissed Zenodorus. Fearing that this district would again become a base for raids on Damascus, Caesar subsequently presented it to Herod. When ten years later

395[*a*] Across the Negev and the desert of Sinai.
396[*b*] See 362[*c*]. These territories comprised Gaza, Joppa and the region of Jericho.
396[*c*] The Hellenistic cities in Transjordan: Gadara, Hippos (Sussita of today) east and southeast of the sea of Galilee that Pompey had liberated from Jewish rule; the coastal towns that had been given to Cleopatra by Antony; and Strato's Tower, which became Caesarea (see 408[*a*]). The maritime outlets greatly expanded Judaea's international trade and export of agricultural produce (see map and captions itemizing Herod's domain). This, and the overall events of 30 BC and later years, won him greater prestige than ever among his own supporters as well as even those who had once sided with the Hasmoneans. See 393[*a*] and later descriptions of his reign.
397[*d*] Gauls—from ancient France.
398[*a*] Actian era or Actiad—a four-year period culminating in an athletic spectacle held at Actium to celebrate the victory over Antony. The present games were held in 28 BC.
398[*b*] All are territories in northern Transjordan and southern Syria: Trachonitis (Argob), Auranitis (Hauran), Batanaea (Bashan) adjoining Trachonitis (see map). Herod had been colonizing them since 32 BC. These districts and those mentioned in 396 would be defined nowadays as extra-territorial additions to the national domain and they extended Herod's kingdom to about 20,000 square kilometers.
398[*c*] In the capacity of chief tax-collector of Lysanias on behalf of Rome. Lysanias is also mentioned as the *tetrarch* of Abilene in the time of Jesus (Luke 3, 1). An inscription has been found on a rock-face near Tell Abila, west of Damascus; it names Lysanias as governor of this region at the time mentioned by Luke. The territories between Trachonitis and Galilee were Bashan (Hauran) and the Gaulan Heights (see map).

The Ara Pacis *friezes, on the Campus Martius in Rome, symbolized the* Pax Romana. *On July 31, 13 BC, the Senate honored Augustus for his victories in Gaul and Spain by building an altar dedicated to the Pax Augusta on which the magistrates, priests and vestals offered a sacrifice. The two friezes (left) depict in relief the procession where Augustus, with his head covered, appears after the lictors (right). Next comes his son-in-law, a consul and high priests. Behind step the* Ahenobarbi *who had direct connections to the Imperial family. Their festive robes contrast with that of the commoners (387)*



399[*d*] 20 BC.

399[*e*]–400[*f*] *Herod, procurator of Syria* Following Pompey's occupation of southern Syria in 63 BC, the provinces, south of Damascus up to the borders of Herod's kingdom, were governed by Varro. In order to subdue the Bedouins of the region, who recognized no alien government, and to maintain internal order, the Romans encouraged native peasants, as well as nomads and semi-nomads, to settle on the land and eventually entrusted this ambitious task of colonization to Herod. In 23 BC Augustus gave Herod the provinces of Batanaea, Auranitis (Hauran), Gaulanitis (Gaulan), Trachonitis and, three years later, the Ituraean Tetrarchy of Zenodorus in eastern Lebanon (see map). The whole area was entrusted to Herod as procurator, as stated in the text. This gave rise to the Roman provinces of Arabia, which became the gateway between East and West. Imperial procurators were high officials responsible mainly for the collection of taxes paid to Rome. Herod played a certain role in the administration of Syria after the year 20 BC (at the zenith of his rule) as a result of the decree of Augustus to the imperial procurators *in provincia* to permit him to take part in in their deliberations and decisions (*Antiq.* XV, 360).

400[*g*] The ambivalence of the Herodian dynasty as between Judaism and the Greco-Roman world was also manifest in the territorial and ethnic composition of Herod's kingdom. The first addition in 40 BC aroused tensions. The Jewish element of Judaea and Galilee was combined with the Idumaeans (loyal to Herod) and the Samaritans, who had a long history of quarrels with Jews (see 63[*c*]). The addition by Augustus in 30 BC of a considerable number of Greek towns still further strengthened the non-Jewish element in Herod's domain. Of these, some accepted Herodian rule (especially the cities he rebuilt and embellished), others, such as Gadara and Hippos opposed the king. The expansion in 23 and 20 BC, while not adding many willing subjects (for the Ituraeans resented Herod's policing) did provide the king and his dynasty with rich lands to be colonized (*War* III, 57). Zenodorus died in 20 BC. Augustus granted Herod his original holding near the sources of the Jordan as well as Caesarea Philippi. Herod also strengthened his ties with other leaders of the Roman state and society. First and foremost was his friendship with Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, Augustus's son-in-law and right-hand man, who built the Pantheon and planned the Roman imperial army. Whether or not he had met Herod during the latter's first visit to Rome in former years, i.e. 40 BC, they certainly became close friends during Agrippa's prolonged sojourn in the East. This friendship greatly benefited the Jewish communities of the Greco-Roman Diaspora, and through these contacts with the heads of the Roman government, Herod was able to safeguard Jewish privileges in Asia-Minor.

401[*a*] Namely 23 BC, but according to *Antiq.* XV, 380, it was the 18th year (20 BC), the latter date being preferred by most modern scholars.

401[*b*] Josephus does not proceed in describing the sanctuary, but he refers to it only briefly to establish it as one of the great construction schemes under his rule. The subject is discussed in *Antiq.* XV, 360, 380 (see illustrations of the supporting walls).

401[*c*] Moreover, a detailed description of the Temple, courts and porticoes appears in our commentary to *War* V, 184–247. "The porticoes referred to as *stoa* in Greek, were formed by two rows of columns; each portico was 15m wide, while the southern Royal Portico was 39m broad. Shaped like a basilical hall they lent great splendor and majesty to the lofty Mount and served also—the Royal Portico in particular—as the gathering place for great assemblies" (B. Mazar, *The Temple of the Lord*, p. 124). The Herodian construction projects undertaken during the following eight years include the supporting walls of the Temple Mount and the porticoes.

401[*d*] Diagram of the Antonia. Compare *War* V, 238–246.

402[*e*] Herod's palace is described in *War* V, 176–183.

403[*a*] Four kilometers.

403[*b*] Approx. three hundred meters.

403[*c*] Sebaste or Samaria was the former ancient capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and was partly restored in Hellenistic times—as attested by numerous remains. The city and the walls were destroyed by John Hyrcanus in 108 BC. In restoring Samaria, Herod

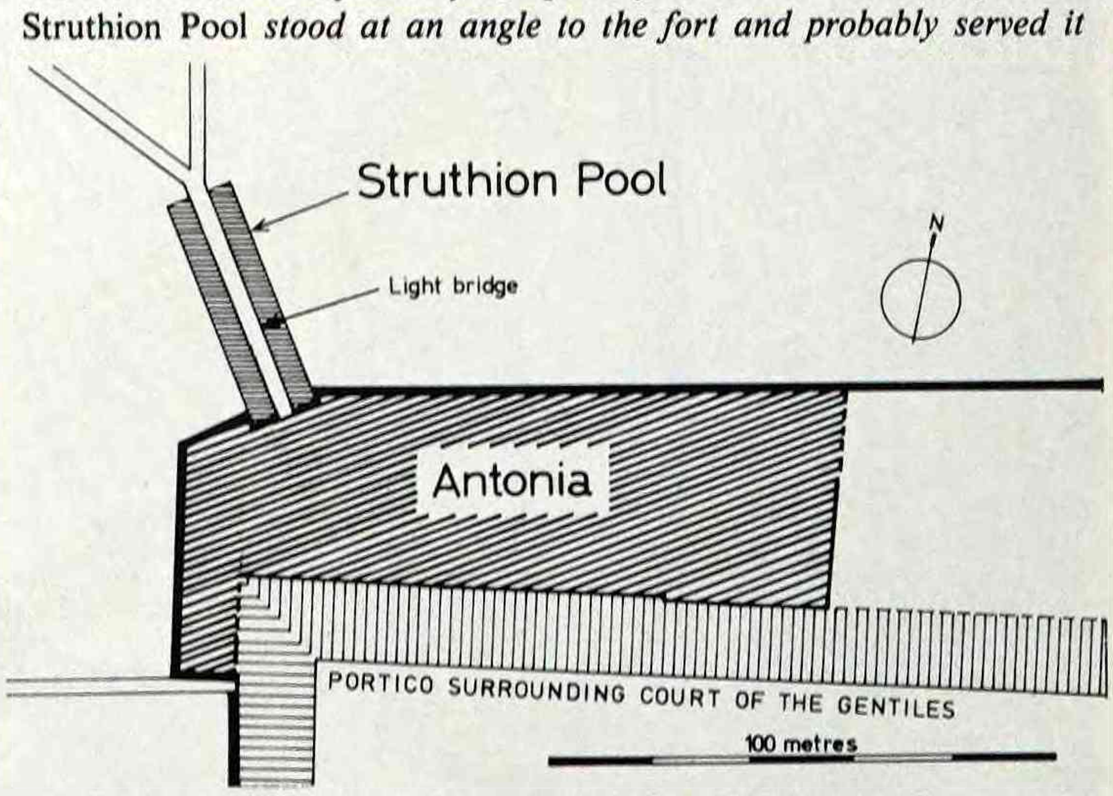
[*d*] Caesar paid a second visit to the area he, moreover, awarded Herod the position of procurator of all Syria [*e*] so that other (Roman) procurators were forbidden from taking measures without his concurrence. (400) Finally, when Zenodorus died, he assigned to him in addition, all the territory between Trachonitis and Galilee [*f*]. More important to Herod than these privileges was that he was second only to Agrippa in Caesar's affections and in Agrippa's second only to Caesar [*g*]. Thus, while he succeeded in acquiring excessive material prosperity, this was surpassed by the even greater development of his moral stature, his greatest aspirations being devoted mainly to works of piety.

Chapter XXI

1. Reconstruction of the Temple and building of the palace

(401) In the fifteenth year of his reign, Herod restored the Temple [*a*]. He enlarged the surrounding area to double its extent by erecting new supporting walls [*b*]. The expenditure involved was tremendous and the result was magnificent beyond compare. This is exemplified by the large porticoes [*c*] around the Temple courts and the fortress which dominated it to the north. Herod reconstructed the porticoes from their foundations; and he restored at tremendous cost the fortress, in a style as luxurious as a royal palace, and called it Antonia in honor of Antony [*d*]. (402) He erected his own palace in the Upper City, comprising two very spacious and beautiful buildings with which the Temple itself could not be compared; he named this after his friends, the one Caesareum, the other Agrippeum [*e*].

The Antonia *stood on the rock plinth now occupied by the Arab Ummariya school which towers over the northwestern corner of Temple Mount. The site was formerly occupied by the Hellenistic* Baris *fort. The* Struthion Pool *stood at an angle to the fort and probably served it*



2. Founding Sebaste in Samaria

(403) It was not in palaces alone that he enshrined their names; whole cities came into being through his munificence. In the district of Samaria he built a city surrounded by magnificent walls twenty furlongs [*a*] in length, settled it with six thousand colonists and allotted them highly productive land. In the heart of the new city, he erected a vast temple enclosed in ground a furlong and a half [*b*] in length, consecrated to Caesar. He named the city Sebaste and granted its citizens a privileged charter [*c*].

3. Dedication of the Temple of Augustus at Paneion

(404) When Caesar afterwards continued to enrich Herod's realm with additional territory [*a*], Herod dedicated to him there as well a further temple of white marble, close to the sources of the Jordan, at a place called Paneion [*b*]. (405) A mountain rises there whose summit reaches to an immense height [*c*]; at its base is an overgrown cavern; within this a sheer precipice descends to a cavity of unknown depth, filled with still water. No plummet has ever reached the bottom, however long the cord [*d*]. (406) The springs—which some consider to be the sources of the Jordan—well up from the outer edge of the cavern. We will give an account of this at a later stage [*e*].

had been aware of its strategic position. The town had served him as an important base in his war against Antigonus and he rebuilt it as a stronghold which could be used against his dissident subjects. He had married Mariamme in Samaria and one of his later wives, a Samaritan, was called Malthace. The town had grown rapidly and prospered. It covered a wide area, about one kilometer from east to west and about the same from north to south, or about 170 acres. Lower porticoes of the walls have remained, including some Herodian towers and remnants of the colonnaded street, 12.5 m. wide, which numbered 600 columns, once surmounted by porticoes and serving as shops and rooms. A Roman residential quarter had stood on the western hill since the days of Gabinius. On the highest elevation, Herod built a magnificent temple and dedicated it to Augustus (*Antiq.* XV, 297–298). It stood on a podium 4 m. higher than the court and was ascended by a wide flight of stairs. Samaria's original stadium and theater were built by Herod in addition to the Forum (128×92.5 m.) and remnants of the colonnade have survived. Most of the remains date back to the second century AD but they reflect the former period of expansion in Herodian times. Near the forum are parts of the aqueduct that brought water to the city from the hills. Herod called the city Sebaste and dedicated it to Augustus (see illustrations).

404[*a*] See 399[*e*]–400[*f*].

404[*b*] *Paneion,* a city on the southern slope of Mount Hermon, later called Caesarea Philippi, and near one of the sources of the Jordan, now called Banias. It was founded in Hellenistic days. After the death of the emperor Augustus, Herod was bequeated the city. It was later the capital of the tetrarchy of his son Philip. The site is mentioned in Matthew 16:13 and Mark 8:27 as one of the cities which Jesus and his disciples visited.

Herod's plot and Jonathan's murder in the bathing-pool of Jericho

405[*c*] The Mount Hermon range, the highest in the country. It is located now in the northern Golan district and borders on Syria and Lebanon.

405[*d*] The most prominent feature of the region was the cave dedicated to Pan, situated at the base of a high cliff near ancient Paneion (few traces of which remain). The cliff is carved with niches which once contained statues; it is inscribed with dedications to Pan and the nymphs (see illustration). The details in the text about the deep cavern seem to derive in part from ancient popular legend.

406[*e*] See *War* III, 509.

The snow-capped Mount Hermon

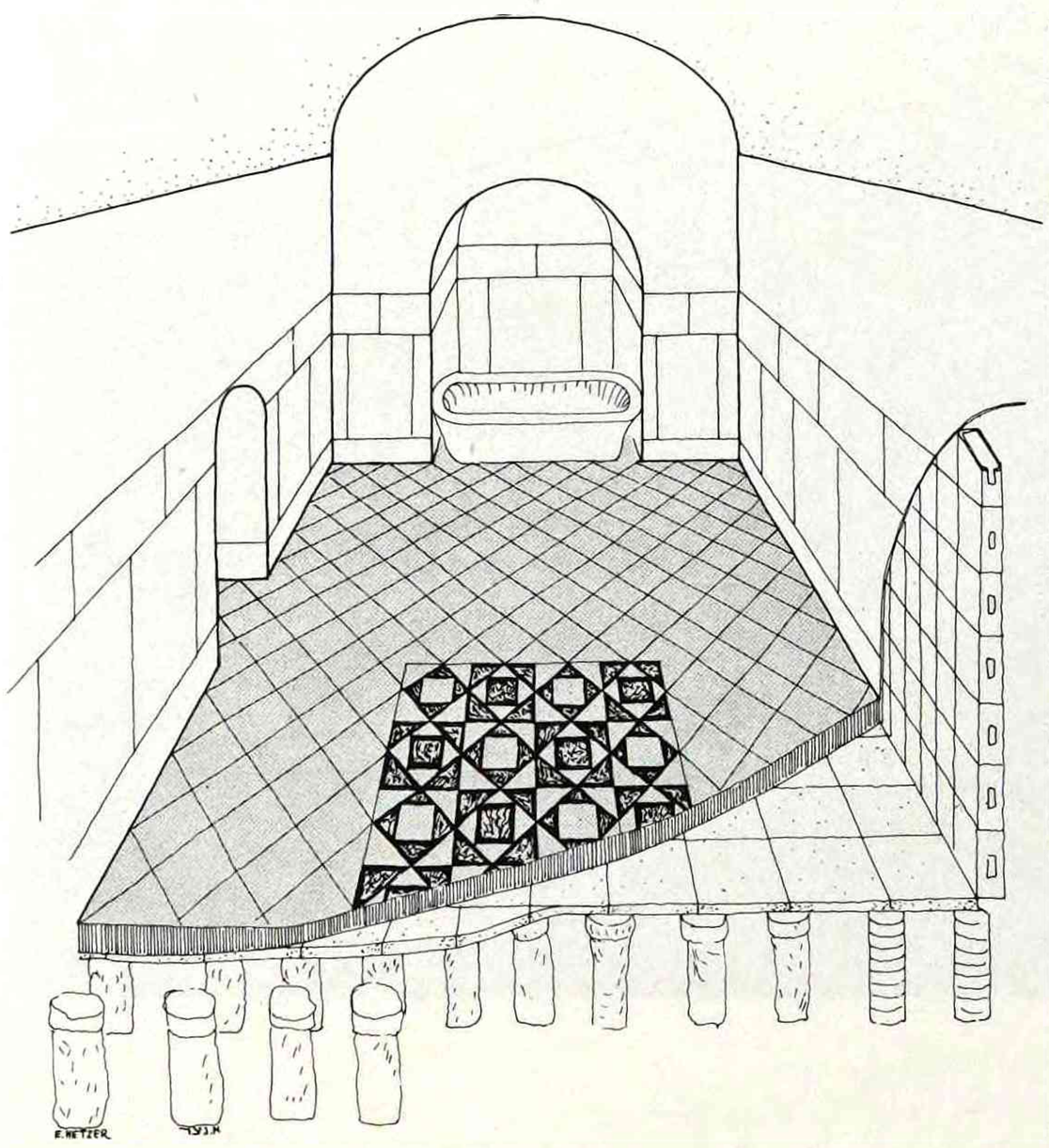
407[*a*] *Cypros,* identified with Tel-el-Aqaba, had once been a Hasmonean fort situated above 1,200 m. from the winter palaces built at the mouth of the dry Wadi Kelt riverbed. Herod named it after his mother. Its luxurious apartments and baths covered close to half an acre and were a favorite meeting place of the Herodians.

407[*b*] The "old royal" or "former palace" mentioned casually by Josephus was only recently identified by E. Netzer (1973). He has since untangled the historical sequence of the royal residences on both sides of Wadi Kelt, west of Jericho, which saw a succession of Jewish rulers for close on two centuries BC. This area, including Tell el Alayik, 2 kms south-west of Jericho, where Wadi Kelt flattens out into the plain—was known for a long time as "Herodian Jericho" or the "New Testament Jericho." In reality, it should be termed "the winter palace complex of the last Hasmonean kings", which was taken over by Herod and his dynasty; it stood about 22 kms east of Jerusalem. Some of the walls of the Hasmonean palace, made from sun-dried mud brick, now stand exposed almost 7 m high. The palace contained two stories and was built apparently by Alexander Jannaeus around a central court and covered an area of 50–65 m. Northeast of the palace, at the foot of the mound, Netzer discovered a huge pool 32.5 m long, 18 m. wide and 4 m. deep fed by two springs. It is divided into two parts by a podium about 5 m wide but only half as high as the pool itself; it was used for swimming and bathing. A large poolside pavilion stood at its southern edge. North of the Hasmonean palace mound is an area divided into six ritual baths (Hebrew *mikvaoth*) built during the three phases of the Hasmonean residence (which are the earliest *mikvaoth* ever discovered). They were a vital part of the Hasmonean family's daily routine, which included both kings and priests. Each *mikveh* has two parts: a storage pool into which the free-flowing water comes via an aqueduct branch (from a spring) where it is temporarily retained, and the stepped small bathing pool itself. A channel between the two parts permitted the pool to be cleaned and cleared and new water introduced (see illustration). Most of the coins found in the palace date back to Alexander Jannaeus' time, but a rare collection belongs to Mattathias Antigonus, the last Hasmonean monarch (40–37 BC).

407[*c*] This winter complex, magnificent as it was, was surpassed by the master builder of them all, Herod (see 418[*b*]; *Antiq.* XV, 53–56, 66). Herod named his winter palace after his Roman friends Augustus and Marcus Agrippa (see illustrations, map and diagrams).

407[*d*] Herod's demonstration of esteem for the emperor was carried across the borders of his own kingdom of Judaea and into the province of Syria, where he set up temples to Augustus in a number of cities; the

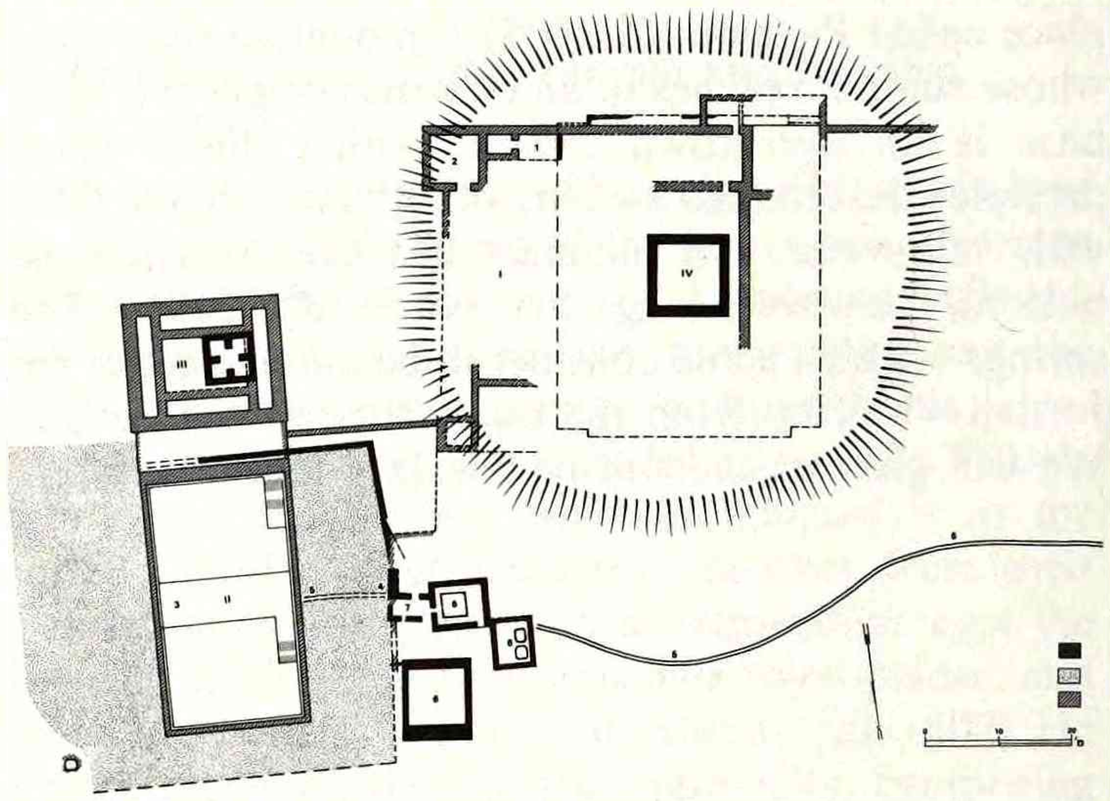
Reconstruction plan of the caldarium, *or heated area of the Cypros baths*



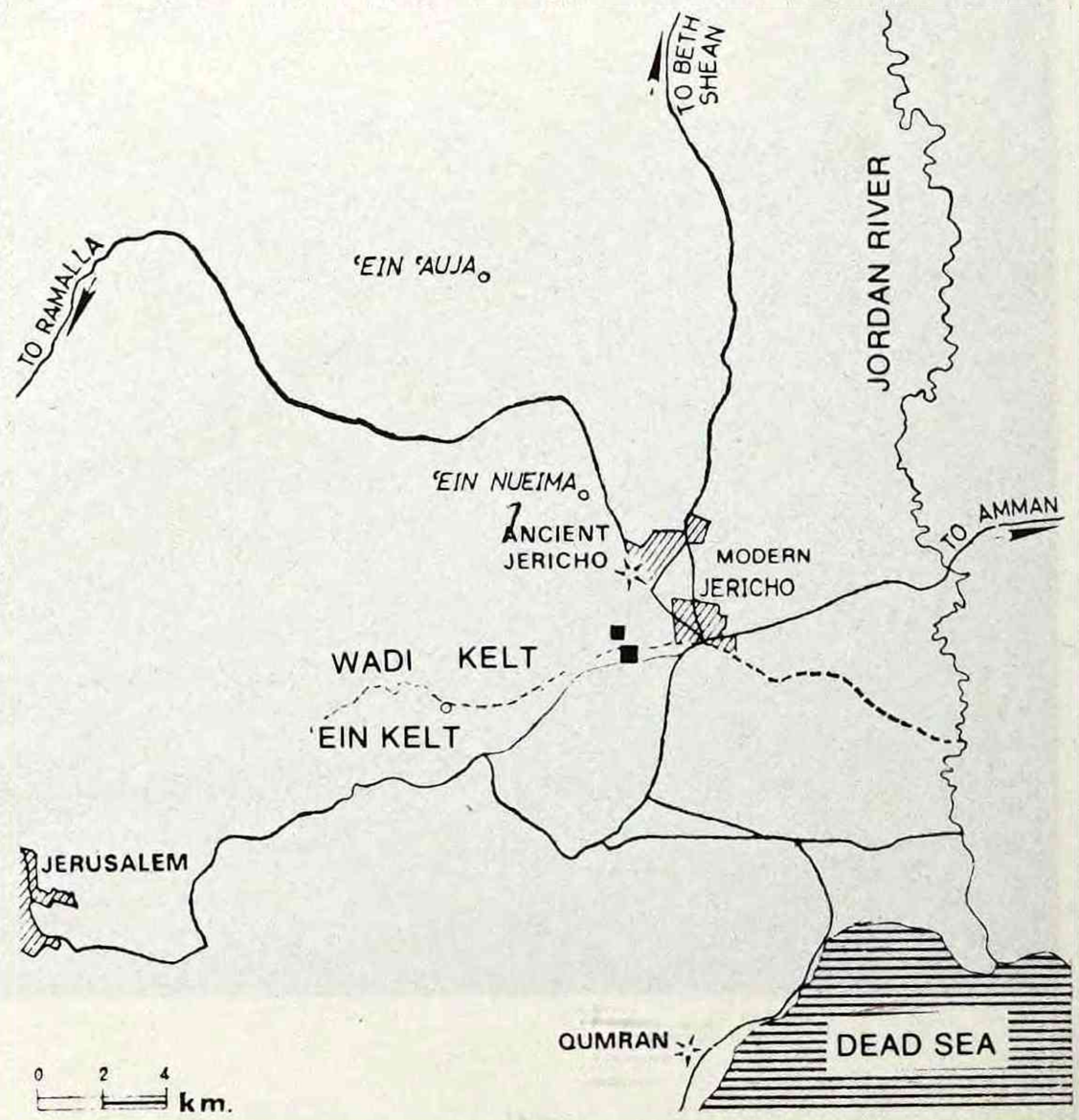
4. Herod's palace in Jericho

(407) At Jericho, between the fortress of Cypros [*a*] and the old royal palace [*b*], he built new buildings, finer and more practical to accommodate visitors and named them after the same friends [*c*]. In fact, one is

Plan of the Hasmonean winter palace north of Wadi Kelt

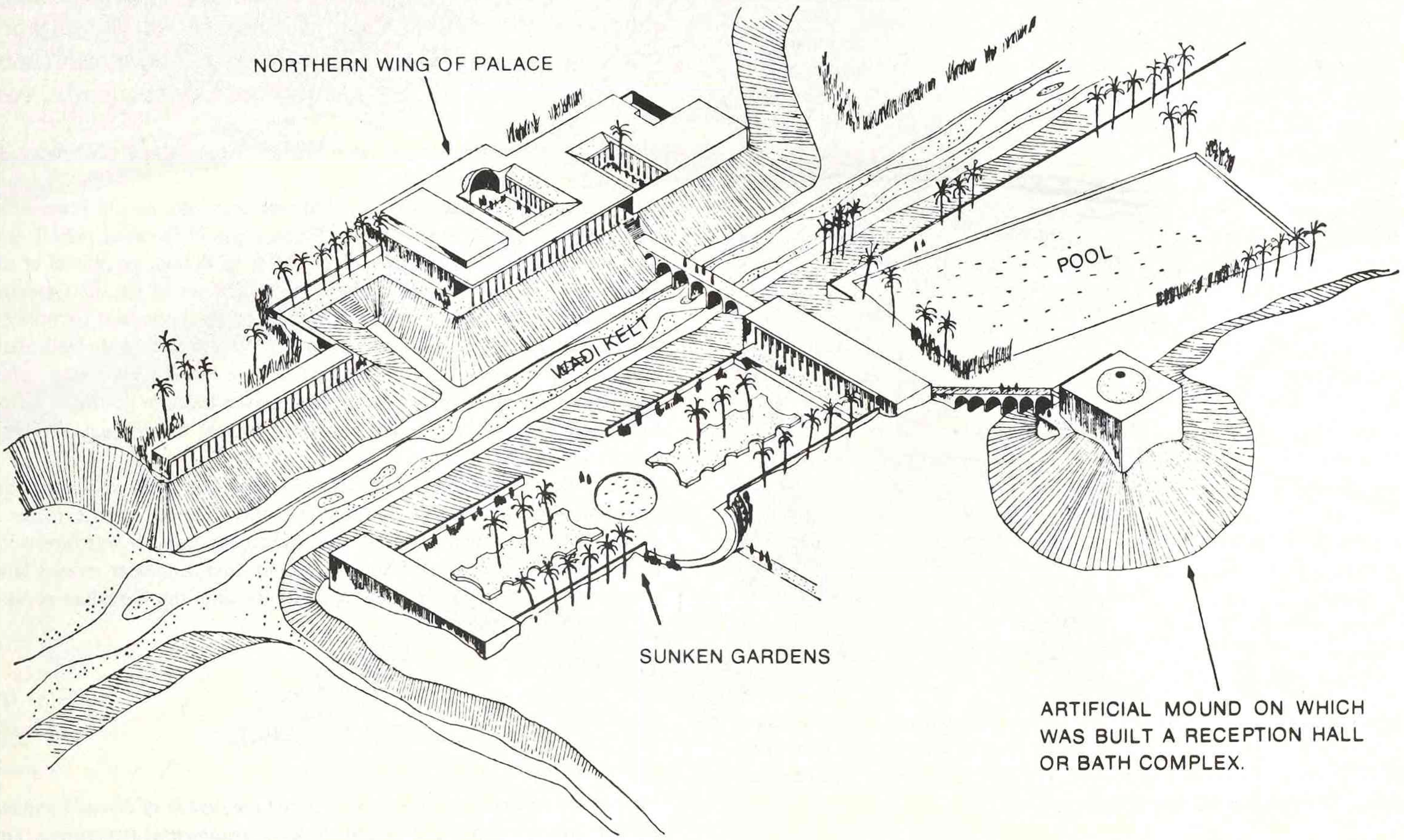


The Jericho area: The small square dot is the Hasmonean palace north of the Wadi Kelt, and the larger square below is the Herodian palace complex. The Hasmoneans brought water from the springs of Ein Auja and Nueima via an aqueduct. Herod's palaces were fed by an aqueduct fed from the Ein-Kelt spring in Wadi Kelt (after E. Netzer)



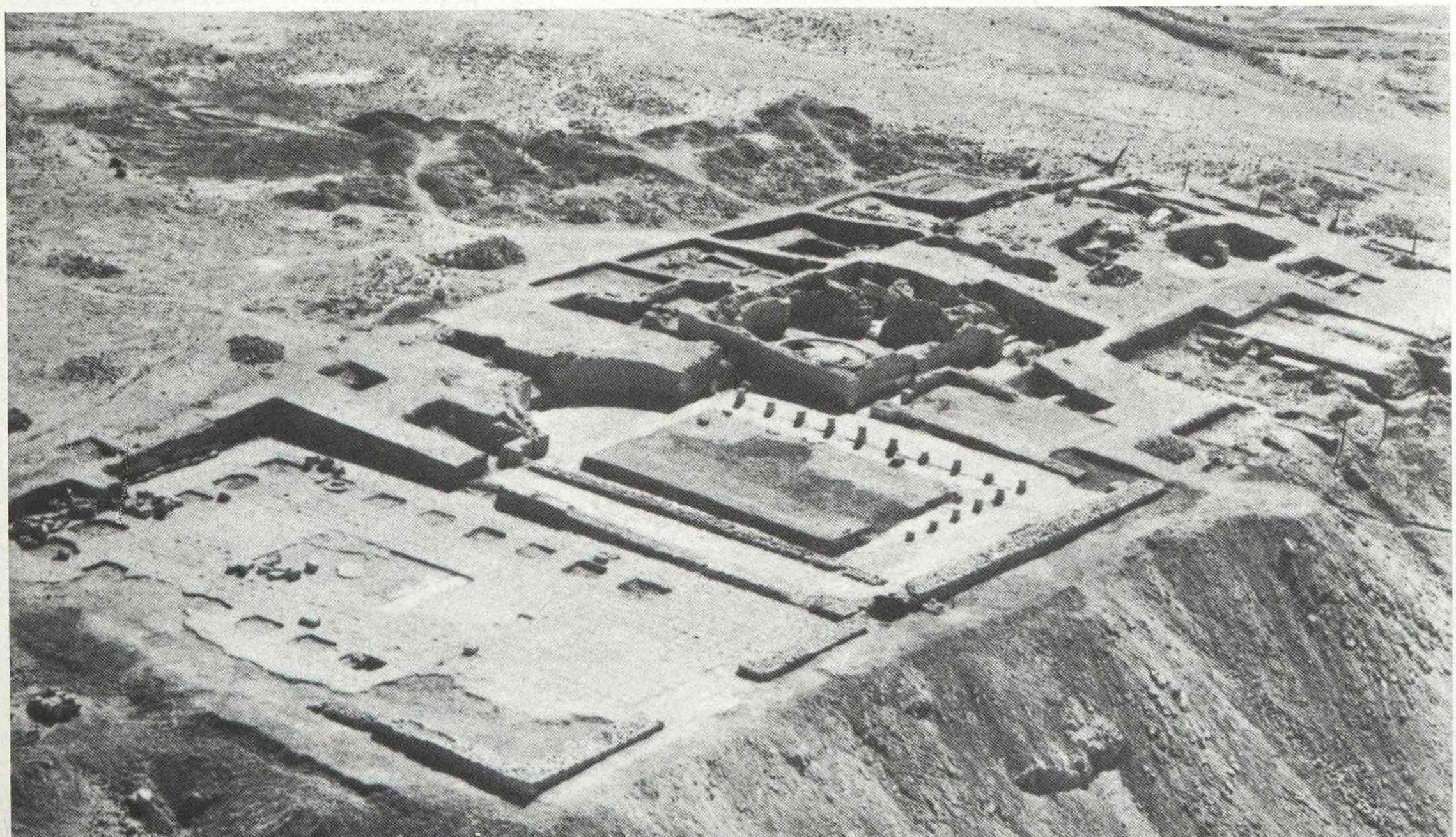
unable to mention any suitable spot within his kingdom which he left without some mark of honor to Caesar [*d*]. Having filled his own realm with temples [*e*], he let tributes of his esteem overflow into the province, where he erected monuments to Caesar in numerous cities.

enthusiasm with which he did this made up for his inability to spread the cult of the emperor in the strictly Jewish areas of his kingdom. Herod considered himself a Hellenistic king, even more ostensibly than the Hasmonean kings, and his court behaved in the grand manner of Hellenistic-Roman courts. The lavishness of his building program is illustrated by the numerous remains found throughout Israel (see 422–425), as well as in Syria and Asia Minor, which are referred to as "the province."



A plan of el-Alayik or Hasmonean-Herodian Jericho situated on the mounds; the Hasmonean palace stood on the northern side of Wadi Kelt. Later, Herod built a structure close to or over the Hasmonean palace. The Hasmonean swimming pool stood south of the wadi, and was divided by a podium. This was the scene of the murder of Aristobulus III, described in para. 437

The Herodian winter palace on the northern side of Wadi Kelt



The Herodian cold room (frigidarium) of the palace. It was a round structure with four semi-circular niches (two of them can be seen in the picture) also surrounded by a wall. The central columns and channels around the niches supported a large pool

E. HEROD BUILDS CAESAREA

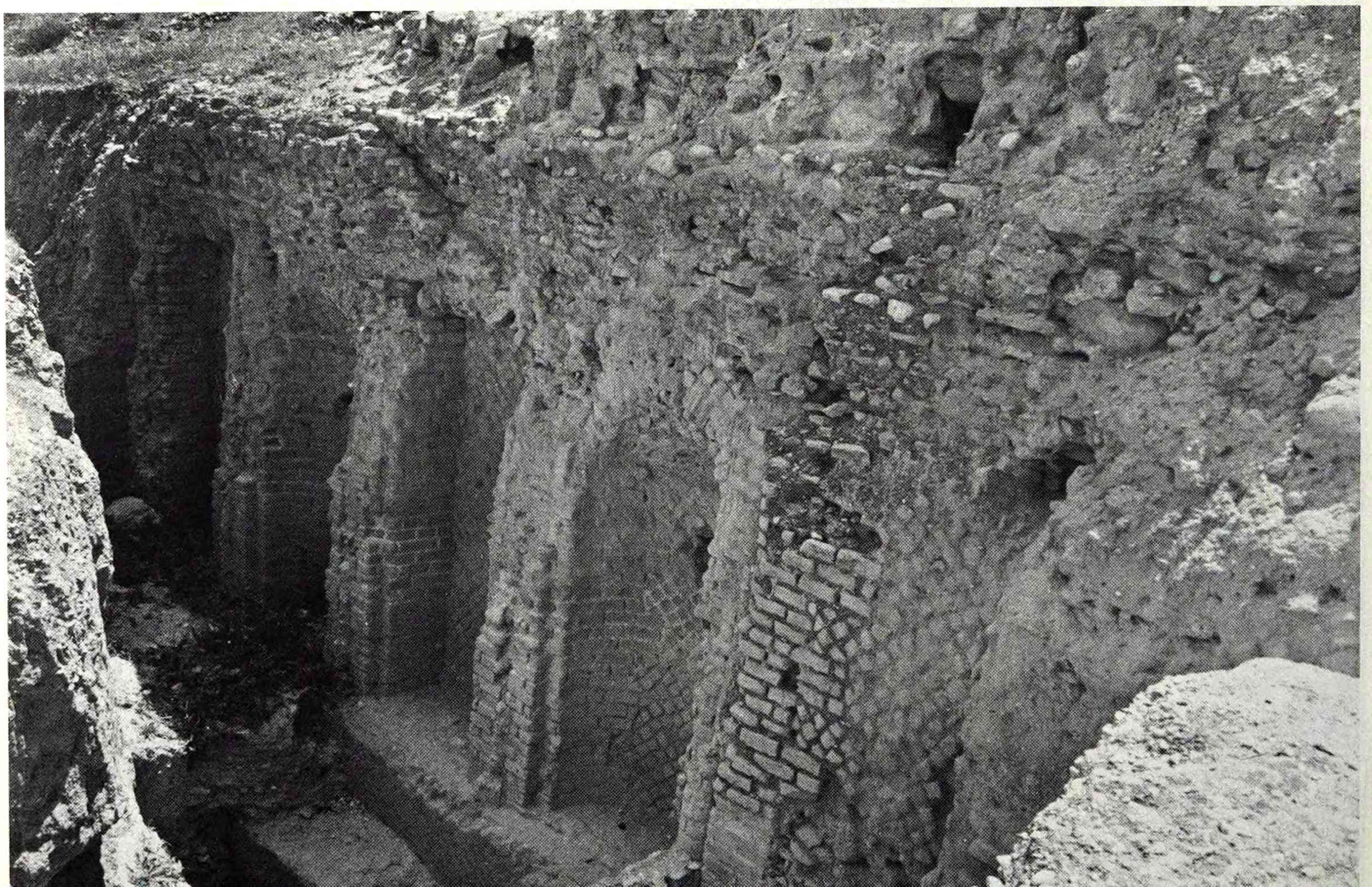
5. (408) He noticed a town on the coast at the time called Strato's Tower [*a*] in a dilapidated state, but thanks to its favorable location was suitable for carrying out his ambitious plans. He rebuilt it entirely of white stone and adorned it with a royal palace of unique splendor. Here more than anywhere else he displayed the brilliance of his mind. (409) The city lies midway between Dora [*b*] and Joppa, on a section of the coast that had been harborless. Consequently, ves-

407[*e*] *Temples,* referring to other memorial and palatial edifices beside the unique Jerusalem shrine.

408[*a*] Strato's Tower (see 80, 156) was originally an old Phoenician port dating back to the end of the Persian (pre-Hellenistic) period; it is also mentioned in a third century BC letter of Zenon, an official of the Ptolemaic court, as the place where he bought wheat for the Egyptian authorities, and which he regarded as one of the important harbors on the Palestinian coast. Alexander Jannaeus bought it from its Hellenistic "tyrant" (governor) but it was lost to the Hasmonean state after Pompey's capture of Jerusalem (63 BC). Even through he rebuilt it, the native autonomous community could not prevent its eventual deterioration in the course of time.

409[*b*] *Dora,* identified with modern Tantura, was originally the Canaanite-Phoenician Dor harbor, probably founded in the fifteenth century BC and which survived until Byzantine times. It was famed for its ancient temple dedicated to Astarte and Zeus, a theater, even a later synagogue. It remained in Phoenician hands until the Herodian period

Four of the vertical niches which bordered the façade of Herod's sunken garden (which contained 24 niches holding ornamental structures). The walls are made of Roman concrete made with two lattice patterns known as opus quadratum *and* opus reticulatum. *Concrete was poured over them to strengthen the lattice and fill the core of the wall and niches*



Pavement of one of the courtyards of Herod's palace showing lime imprints of the original marble slabs

Ruins of Strato's tower, dating to the third century BC

409[*c*] *Why did Herod establish Caesarea?* A corresponding account of the building of Caesarea in *Antiq.* XV, 331–341 emphasizes that Herod and his engineers planned the work in advance, and it lasted for twelve years (22–10 BC) including the palace, theater and hippodrome. The city was called Caesarea of Palestine and sometimes Caesarea Sebaste, to distinguish it from other Caesareas in the Roman Empire. The then current expression "coast of Phoenicia" referred to the northern coast of Palestine which was still a trading place for the Phoenician as well as the Jewish seafarers and merchants. Herod's endeavor to join the prevailing peace and prosperity of the Roman *imperium* necessitated the creation of a large and "modern" harbor at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, to enhance the economic progress of the country and to compete with established harbors of the region. In Herod's time, the harbor towns and coastline of Ptolemais (Acre) and Dora lay outside his realm and Joppa further south was hostile to Herod. Therefore, he chose Strato's Tower as the best site. His motivation was not merely its location but, in the opinion of L. I. Levine (*Caesarea under Roman Rule*), was that it lay on the periphery of western Palestine and enabled him to build a capital city of his own, which would not be dependent on the former political regime, but would owe him total allegiance. This attitude is germane to Herod's character and matches former parallels, among them King David's choice to build his own capital in Zion, Jerusalem; Ptolemy's plan to establish Hellenistic Alexandria, or the Caesarea of Mauritania founded by Juba.

410[*d*] *Caesarea and the economy of Palestine* Herod's jewel was the city of Caesarea, and Josephus' account indicates that the harbor was also one of Herod's most remarkable works of construction, ranking next to the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, and rivaling the Greek harbor of Piraeus in size. It grew rapidly into one of the largest international ports in the Mediterranean and promoted the export of Palestinian agricultural produce and manufactured goods. It also served as a center for the transhipment westwards to Greece, Italy and particularly, Rome, of precious goods which came from the Far East, Southern Arabia and the Eastern Africa coast. This transformed Herod's realm into one of the great commercial centers of the ancient world and was a vast source of wealth for his people. In the years which followed Herod's death (AD 6) Caesarea became the headquarters of the Roman government in Palestine.

412[*a*] Seventy meters.

412[*b*]–413[*a*] *The phenomenal engineering feat* The huge blocks of hard limestone originated from inland quarries on the hills facing the sea (the scars left by the quarrying are visible to this day). The blocks were 12.25 m. long, 2.75 m. thick. and 3 m. wide, each weighing tens of tons. They were lined together to form the foundation of the 61 m. wide inner mole. Successive excavations at Caesarea by land and sea, conducted since 1959, have illustrated the fact that the work was executed systematically according to a preconceived and top priority plan, and that the creation of Caesarea had not conformed to the usual process of gradual growth from a natural sea inlet or old harbor into a vast port. Archaeological exploration of the entire site, underwater and on land, covering the area which lies between the open seashore and the elevated podium built inland, reveals important remains. Divers of the underwater research team discovered the breakwater jutting into the sea. Further excavations brought to light a massive wall 9 m. wide running out westward from the elevated podium inland towards the open sea. This proves that the building of the port began with an excavation of the area between the podium and the sea, in order to dig an *inner harbor* and build piers east (inland) of the seashore. Bulwarks were erected to protect the inner basins. Following this, two breakwaters were built on both sides of the inner harbor, the northern arm, running from north-east to north-west, measuring 250 m. and the southern arm, 600 m. long, running out into the sea. This comprised a huge mole where ships could anchor with the protection of sea walls mentioned above, the sheltered area measuring three-and-a-half acres. When construction was completed, the narrow strip of seashore was removed. This allowed the sea to enter the inner basins, the mooring berths and the storehouses at the eastern end of the harbor, which were built in the shape of vaulted chambers 20 m. long, 6.40 m. wide, and 13.50 m. high (see diagram and illustrations). Deposits of seashells were found 30–45 m. from the inland podium at a depth of some 3 m., confirming the existence formerly of the

sels sailing to Egypt along the coast of Phoenicia [*c*] had to ride at anchor in the open sea because of the threatening south-west wind. Even when it blows moderately from this quarter, it dashes the waves to such a height against the cliffs, that when they ebb they convulse wildly far out to sea. (410) But the king spared no expense and enterprise, and he triumphed over nature by constructing there a harbor larger than Piraeus and providing it also with deep roadsteads within its inner basins [*d*].

6. (411) Despite the unpropitious nature of the site, he wrestled with the difficulties so successfully that the solidity of his masonry could defy the sea, while its beauty gave no hint of the obstacles encountered. After Herod had marked out the comparative dimensions of the harbor, of the size mentioned above, he had blocks of stone sunk into twenty fathoms of sea—most of which were fifty feet long, nine deep and ten broad, some being even larger. (412) When these submarine foundations had risen to water level he built above the surface a mole two hundred feet [*a*] wide; one hundred of these are built out into the sea to break the force of the waves and therefore called the breakwater, while the remainder support the stone wall that encircles the harbor [*b*]. Massive towers are spaced at intervals above this wall and the most conspicuous and magnificent is called Drusium after Caesar's stepson, Drusus.

enclosed inner harbor. A severe earthquake damaged the harbor in AD 132. It became unusable from the fifth century onwards and became a fishing village. It has recently changed into one of Israel's leading tourist resorts.

413[*a*] The inlets described in the previous note, which were used for the landing and storing of merchandise formed part of the substructure under the inland podium, 15 m. higher than the surrounding ground.

413[*b*].–414[*c*], [*d*], [*e*] The massive towers were dedicated to the two most distinguished members of Augustus' household. The 1960 excavations revealed that the small elevation facing the eastern end of the harbor area where the remains of the temple were observed, represented an artificial mound, or the acropolis of Caesarea, which was visible from a great distance. The southern end of the mound consisted of the vaulted chambers described above. The main demonstration of loyalty to Augustus was in the form of emperor-worship and in the erection of statues and temples in his honor. At Caesarea, the temple of Augustus was a prominent landmark; it housed two colossal statues, one of the goddess Roma and one of Augustus (*Antiq.* XV, 339).

414[*f*] The "province" to which the statues were dedicated was Syria (in Roman territory) though Herod was the virtual owner of the new harbor. Such courtesies were part of the intricate political game with Rome at which Herod was so adept.

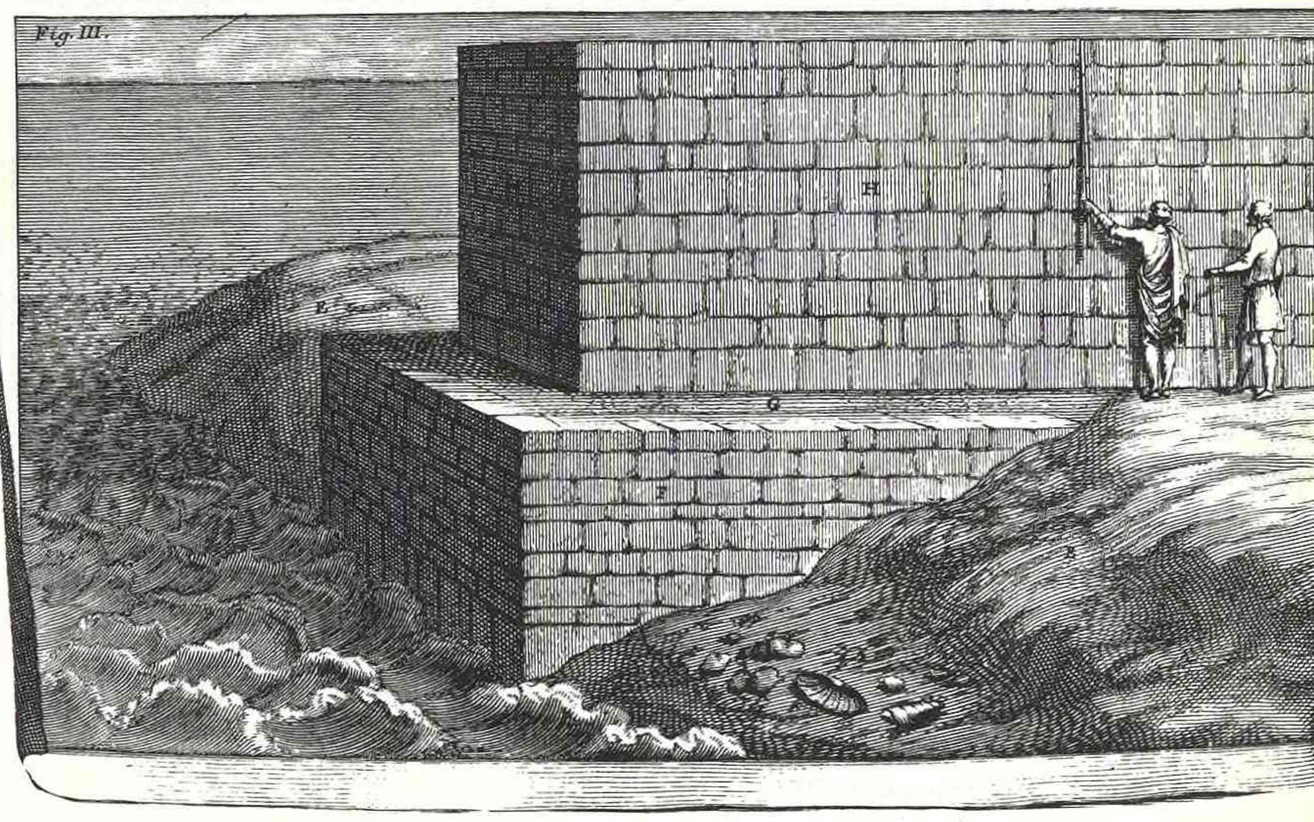
414[*g*] *The first Judaean seaport erected in the open roads* Abner Raban of Haifa's Hebrew University Dept. of Marine Civilization has called attention to the fact that Josephus' description of the construction of the Caesarea harbor reveals, at one and the same time, not only that Herod's engineers had actually built the most ancient port ever erected in open roads, i.e. not within a natural harbor—a feat seldom equaled by modern engineering—but also the erection of breakwaters and ports in the open seas. The Roman harbor of Ostia, once considered the first of its kind, was only built fifty years after Caesarea. Josephus describes a sea wall fifty meters wide, and undersea investigation and measurements reveal that it rested on a wide understructure which prevented underground water seepage, a system adopted in recent marine work. Nowadays, the builders of an artificial island in the open seas—intended to house an atomic plant—usually pile up a solid stone ring in the sea,

7. (413) Many recesses in the wall provide landing places where mariners could put into harbor, and the whole terrace fronting these inlets forms a broad-walk for disembarking passengers [*a*]. The harbor entrance faces north because the north wind is the gentlest in that locality. Colossal statues [*b*] stand at the harbor mouth, three on either side, resting on columns. The columns which stand on the left of the vessels entering the port are supported by a massive tower, those on the right side by two upright blocks of stone clamped together, their height even surpassing the tower on the opposite side. (414) Houses abutting the harbor are also built of white stone and the streets of the city—laid out the same distance apart—converged upon the harbor. On rising ground which faced the harbor-mouth [*c*] stands Caesar's temple, remarkable for its beauty and expense. It housed a colossal statue of the emperor, in no way inferior to the Olympian Zeus [*d*] which it resembles and one of Roma, rivaling that of Hera at Argos [*e*]. Herod dedicated the city to the province [*f*] and the harbor to the seafarers of those waters [*g*]; and in tribute to Caesar, he named the city, Caesarea [*h*].

whose top juts slightly above sea level, and serves as an effective and safe breakwater. Herod did the same. A. Raban's measurements observed the deep-broad understructure and its narrower top, the ancient breakwater. The erecting of the understructure utilized a Phoenician building tradition in erecting stout sea walls by piling up vast ashlars (without cement), and this method may throw light on the building of the huge supporting walls of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (cf. *War* V, 188–191).

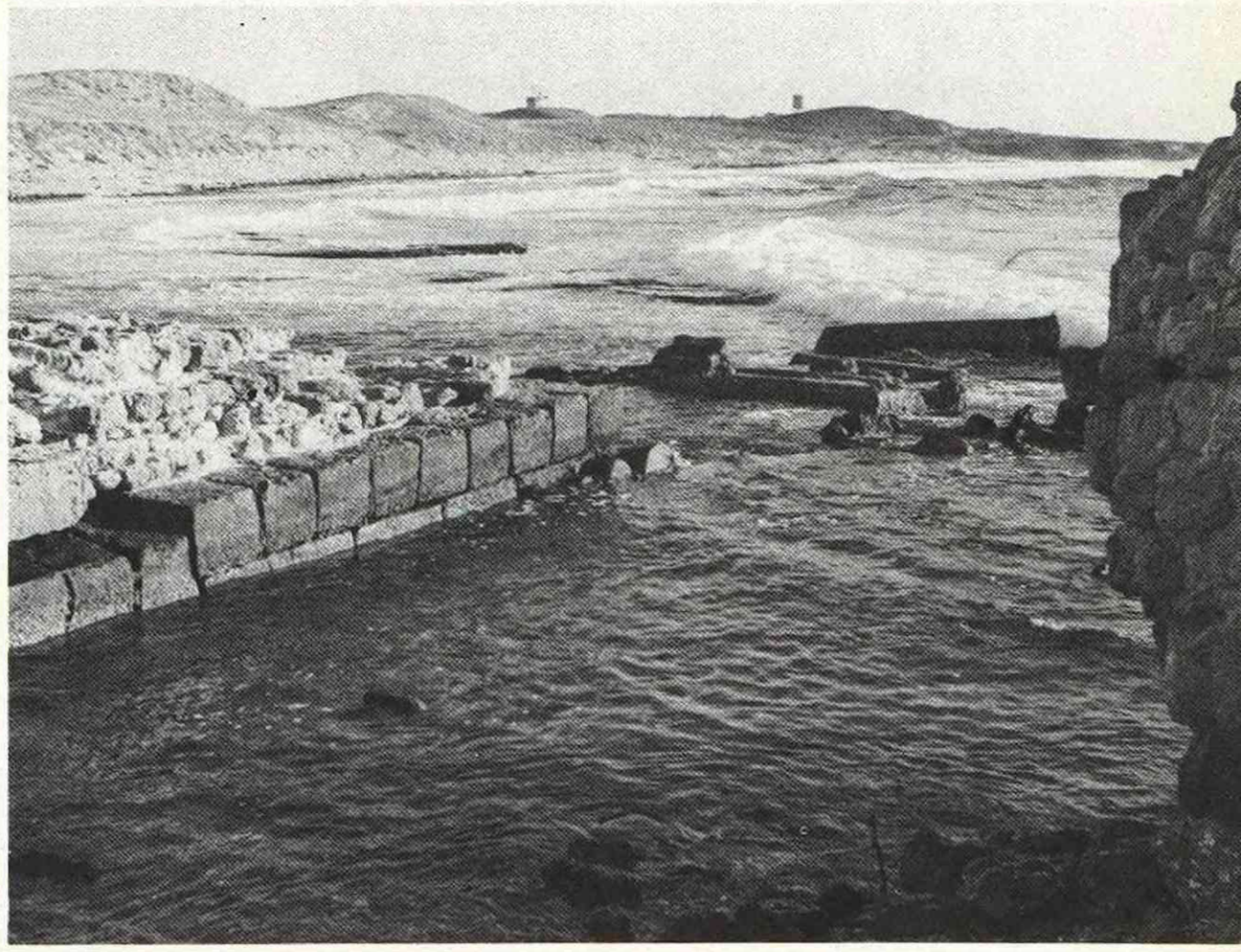
What considerations led Herod to undertake such a daring and expensive feat? It is known that Jewish and Syrian merchants assumed an important share in foreign commerce under the Empire (as attested by many Talmudical references). Caesarean merchants had business contacts with Bostra—one of the chief caravan cities in the Syrian desert—whose caravans provided an outlet for jewels, silks, gold and incense. The large maritime cities of the Mediterranean flourished on inter-provincial trade, for the sea was a main avenue of communication for the whole Mediterranean basin—the hub of the civilized world. An important port of call for ships from the eastern Mediterranean was Rome itself, and commercial ties between Caesarea and Rome are verified by Talmudic statements naming its participants and further suggested by Jews of Caesarea living in Rome. Herod had realized the importance of the food trade in the Greco-Roman world, which depended for its very existence on food production and trade. Rome had grown into a very large center; a wealthy and lavish metropolis; it would buy any amount of imports, at any price. While Judaea may not have been rich in exportable foods apart from oil and figs—it was situated advantageously between the Mediterranean coast and the Indian Ocean. Herod exploited the advantage to the full by shipping spices, perfumes, incense, gold and silk to Rome by the quickest route (the same used in the shipping of wheat from Syria and Egypt to Rome). He commanded the services of the best available navigators—which Rome did not possess. The former knew how to navigate during the monsoons and overcome risks; whereas it is a known fact that Rome did not navigate ships through the Red Sea (for the Indian-Arabian trade) before the second century AD. Up to that time none but the Nabataean merchants sailed this sea. Herod planned his first sailing in the spring (after the winter storms) and his ships reached Rome first, thus securing the highest price for his merchandise. This considerable source of wealth may also help to explain the immense fortunes King Herod could spend on rebuilding the Temple Mount, the Temple, his numerous palaces and structures he financed outside of Judaea, as well as the vast sums he willed to the emperor and empress.

414[*h*] *Caesarea Sebaste or Caesarea of Palestine* Josephus records that there were six other gigantic statues at the entrance of the harbor. The base of these, embedded in the sea bottom, was seen by members of the E.A. Link underwater expedition of 1960. A silver coin was found by this expedition, outlining the harbor and its features. A sewer 1.80 m. high, and 1 m. wide, ran parallel to the seashore and west of it was a street paved with large flagstones. Several small openings were provided for drainage from the street to the sewer.



The engineering methods used by Herod's architects consisted in erecting the massive mole with large stones laid in the seas as a breakwater. This followed a procedure recommended by M. Vitruvius, the famous contemporary Roman architect and engineer of that period (who wrote the oldest work on architecture in existence). The stone wall was laid out first at the edge of the beach, then gradually into the seas, using large stones and reinforcing materials. Larger stones were then erected on top of such heavy foundations as shown in Vitruvius' illustration reproduced here, thus forming a huge cofferdam or breakwater in the seas

The remains of ancient quays or breakwaters (left and right) built into the sea seem to confirm the methods recommended by Vitruvius, as shown



415[*a*] The amphitheater stood at the southern extremity of the city facing the open sea, and was an innovation that Herod introduced into Palestine and the Near East. Its base was a solid concrete construction; above it rose the seats and numerous vaulted entrances (see illustrations). Herodian remains have survived in the *cavea* (steep semicircular seating area), its stairways, channels for the evacuation of water running around the *orchestra*, and a concentric gangway. Little remains of the original Herodian structure. The floor of the orchestra was coated with plaster, painted in vivid colors, while its walls were decorated to imitate marble panelling. Part of the original *cavea* with its stone seats, and the orchestra in the middle, have been cleared, showing that the theater had been constructed on Hellenistic lines. When the *cavea* and orchestra were rebuilt during the second-third centuries AD, materials used in the Herodian structure were used again. The theater of Caesarea, through constant rebuilding from the first century AD to later Byzantine times, proved to be a repository of styles of the theaters in the ancient world. The final act was to build a fortress reinforced by a tower on top of its remains and the very beautiful Herodian marble decorations were burnt to lime.

415[*a*] *The Pilate Stone* In one of the reconstructions of the theater after the earthquake, a stone bearing an inscription mentioning Pontius Pilate was re-used as an ordinary building stone of the seating steps of the auditorium. The most recent reading of the stone, 82 cms high × 69 cms wide and 22 cms thick, is:

[kal[endis] Iulil] s TIBERIEUM [in honor of Tiberius]
[marcus] Po]NTIUS PILATUS [Pontius Pilate]
[praef]ECTUS IUDA[ea]? [prefect of Judaea]
[d]E[dicavit] (?)

This inscription was originally part of a construction erected in honor of the emperor Tiberius. The completion of the city was marked by festivities including horse-racing, gladiatorial combats, an exhibition of wild animals, compositions in music and athletic competitions.

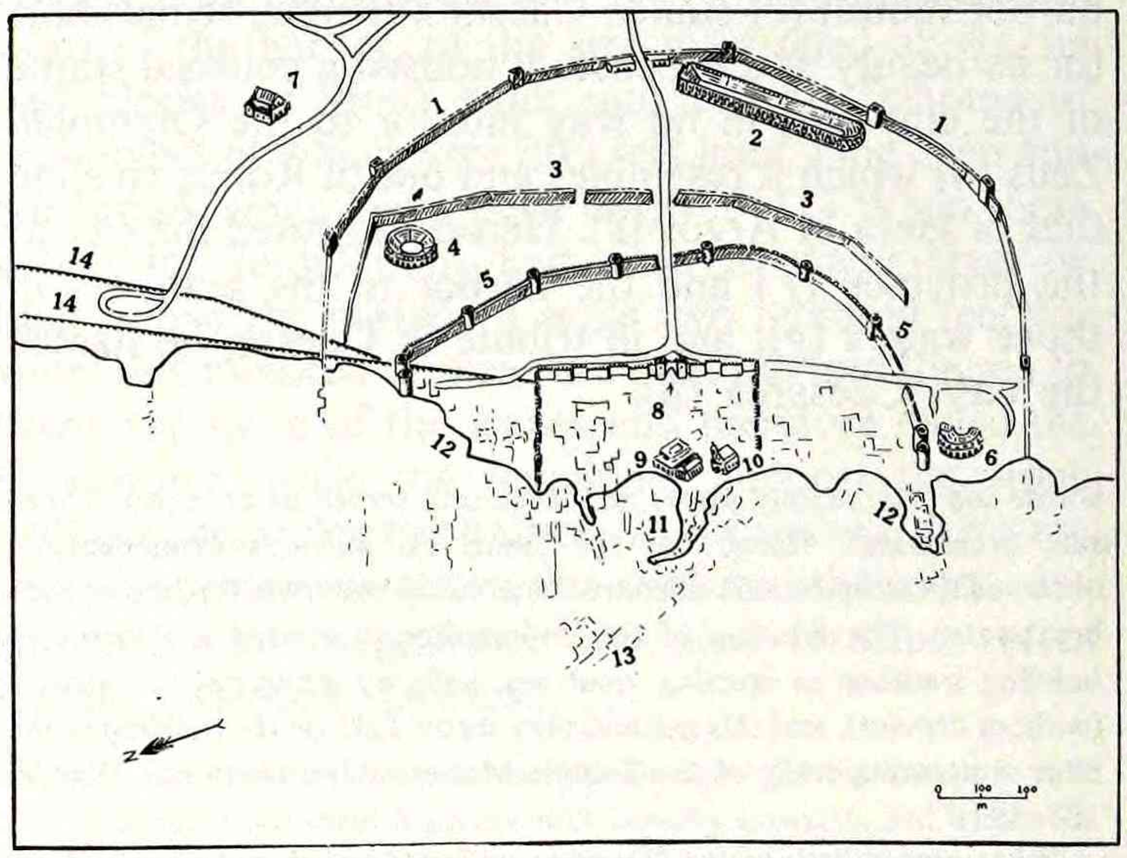
415[*b*] *Forums and public buildings* In the first century AD, the forums and public areas besides the amphitheater included a large Jewish quarter, a court of Justice and other magnificent structures, as well as a synagogue of the same period. All the streets, as stated, converged on the harbor where a large customs-house controlled the vast import and export trade of the great port.

415[*c*] *The water-supply and high-level aqueduct of Caesarea* Though Josephus does not mention Caesarea's water-supply, it is pertinent to explain that the area is lacking in springs and there are no rivers close to the city; moreover, storage of rainwater would not have provided an adequate supply for a large city. Two aqueducts were therefore built, one, carried on arches, which brought water from distant springs. The high-level aqueduct of Caesarea dates to the time of Herod; the other dates to later Roman times.

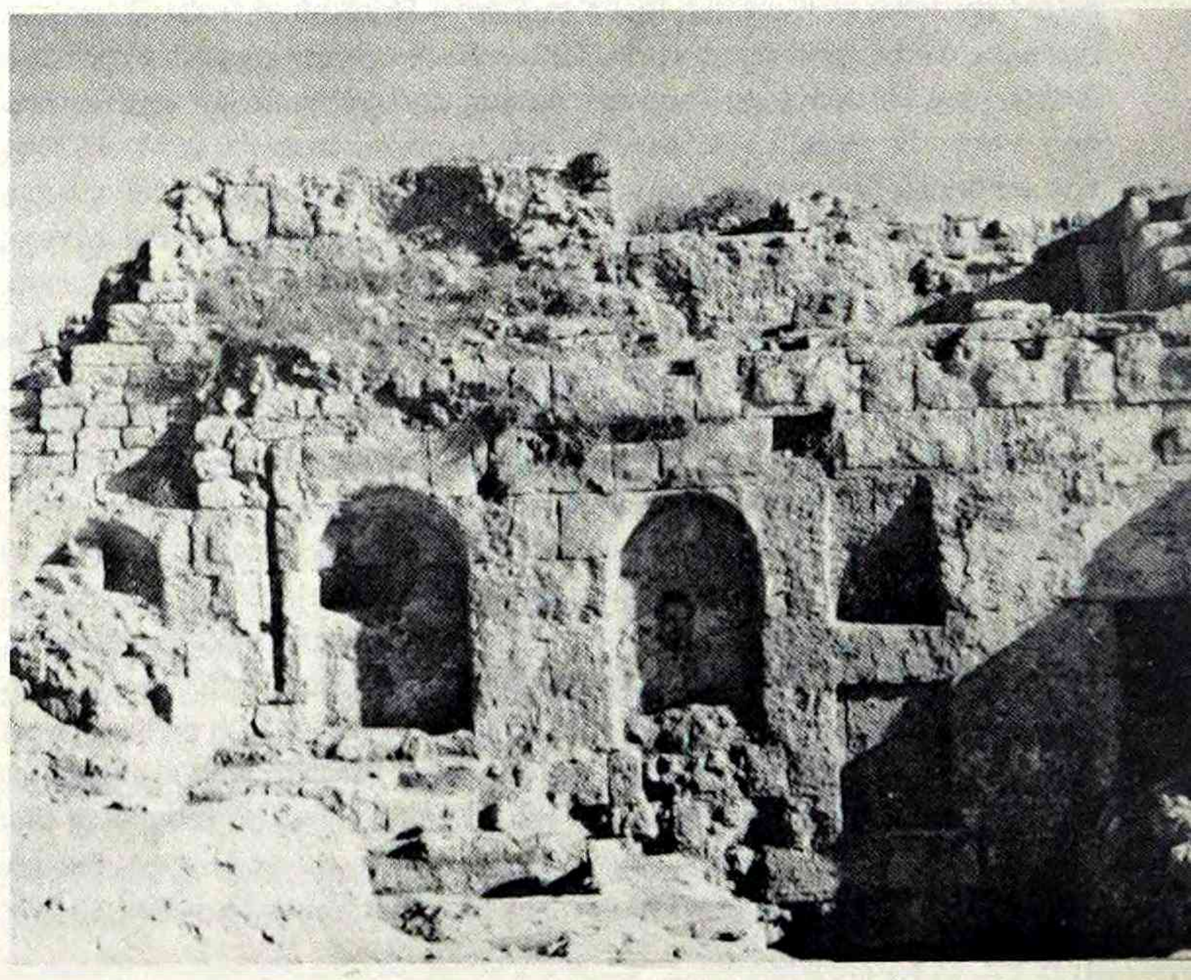
415[*d*] *The Olympian Games* Herod actively promoted social contacts with the whole Hellenistic-Roman world by inviting representative artists, writers, performers, merchants, aristocrats, and leaders of all kinds from every part of the Roman Empire, to visit him in Jerusalem and mingle with the upper classes. Added to that were the invitations to the great quinquennial festivals (not to be confused with the Olympic Games which met every four years at Olympia in Greece). These festivals were organized in Caesarea and in Jerusalem. Athletes and other classes of contestants were invited from every land, attracted by the hope of winning prizes, and by the glory of victory... for Herod offered large prizes not only to the winners in gymnastic games, but also to those engaged in music, who were called *thymelikoi* (actors and musicians like those of the guild of Dionysos, and other entertainers; (*Antiq.* XV, 268–274).

416[*e*] *Anthedon,* a Hellenistic coastal city 3.5 km. north of Gaza on the route to Ascalon, formerly conquered by Alexander Jannaeus, and then by the Romans. It was one of the cities which Augustus gave to Herod as a reward for his loyalty in the war against Mark Antony and Cleopatra. Though Herod, after restoring it, renamed it Agrippias in honor of M. Vipsanius Agrippa, Augustus' co-regent and Josephus' close friend, later imperial coins bore the old name.

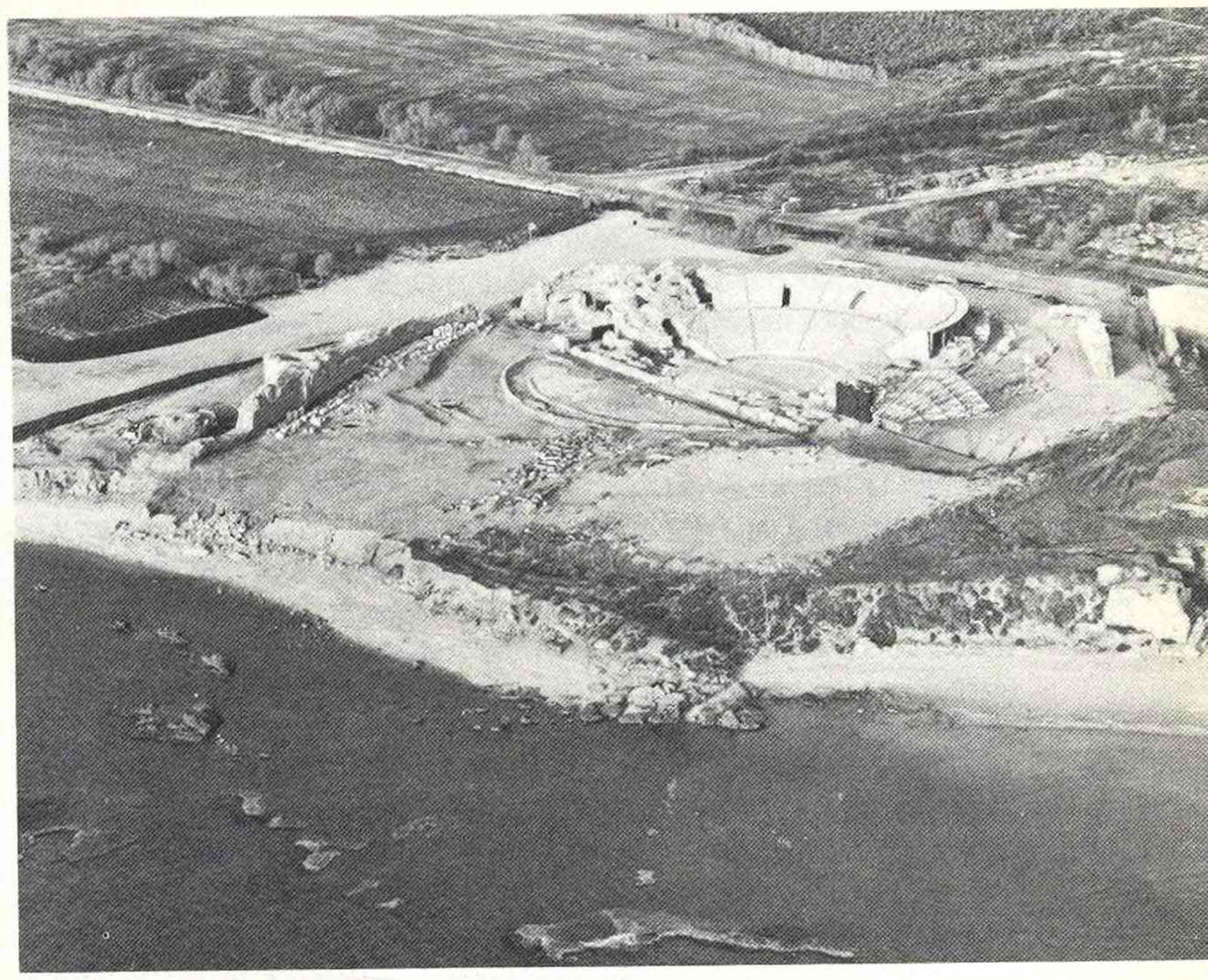
8. (415) All the other buildings—the amphitheater, theater [*a*] forum [*b*]—were constructed on a scale befitting the name that the city bore [*c*]. Furthermore, he instituted four yearly games and named them after Caesar inaugurating the first contest held in the hundred-and-ninety second Olympiad [*d*] with the personal gift of prizes of the highest value, the royal bounty extending not only to the winners, but also to those who came second and third. (416) He also rebuilt Anthedon [*e*], a coastal town previously devastated by war, and renamed it Agrippeum. So great was his extraordinary affection for this same friend Agrippa, that he even engraved his name over the gate which he had erected in the temple.



Outline plan of Caesarea
1, 3, 5, Herodian and later Walls
2. Hippodrome
4. Amphitheater
6. Theater
7. Byzantine church
9. Podium
10. Crusader church
11. Harbor
14. Aqueducts

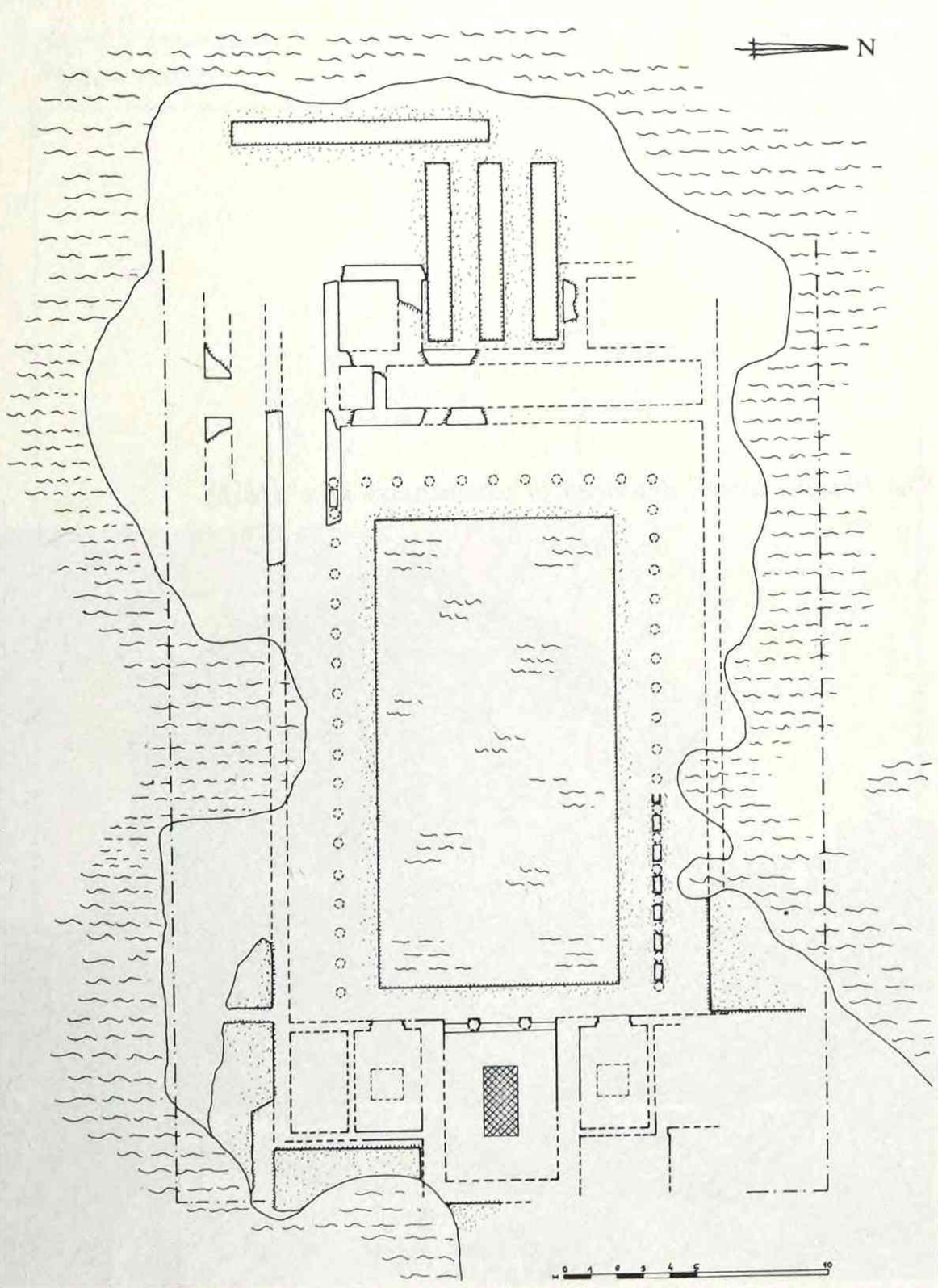


Right: The podium (No. 9 in the outline) facing the ancient harbor



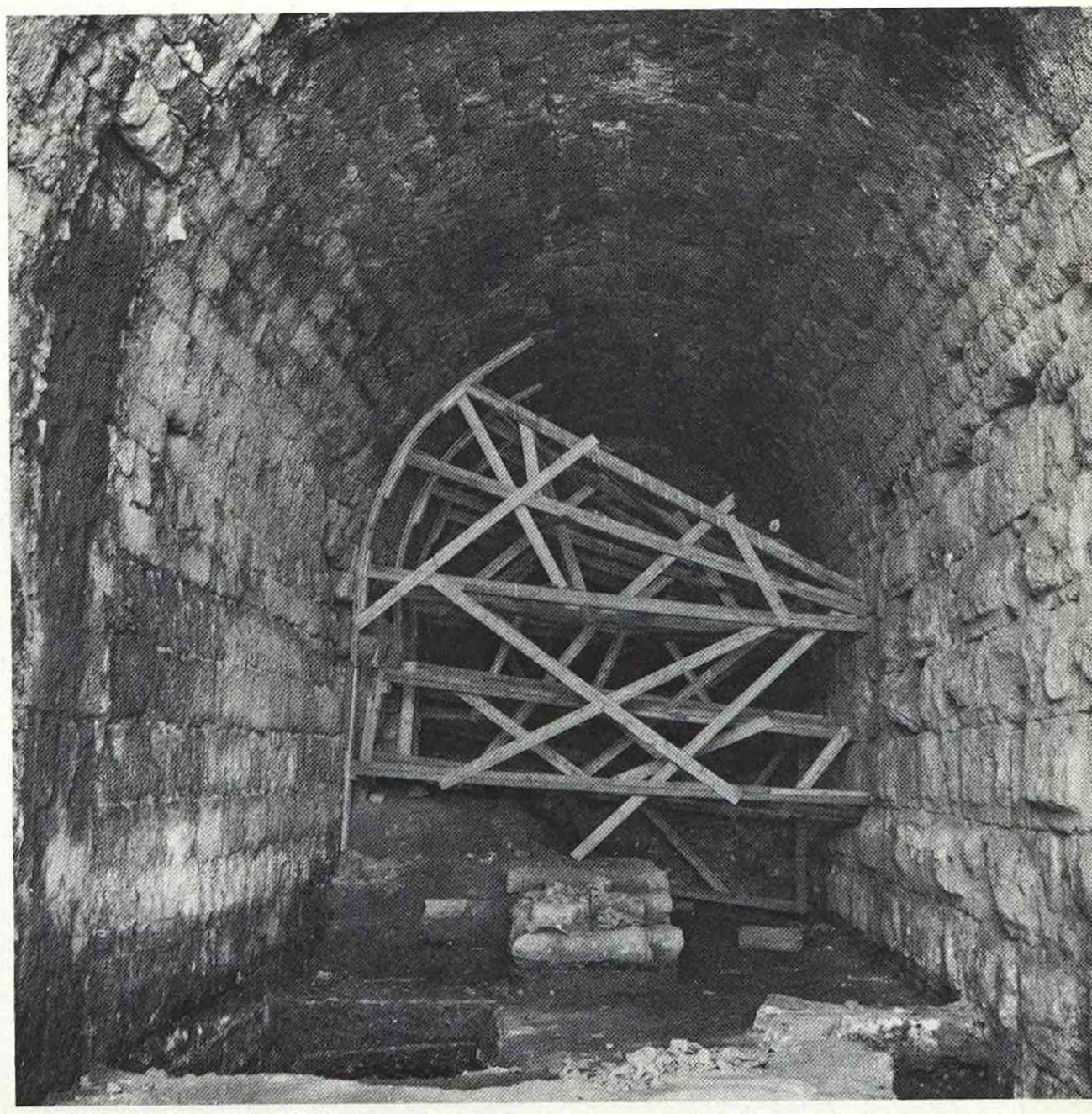
Upper left: Aerial view of the architectural sites of Caesarea. They covered miles of houses, streets and public buildings.
Right: Aerial view of the restored theater and beach

Below left: Plan of the presumed remains of Herod's palace situated west of the theater (6 in the outline). The wavy lines at the side indicate the rocky soil quarried to build the house



Right: The podium (No. 9 in the outline) facing the ancient harbor

Below: Vaulted chambers: Herodian period



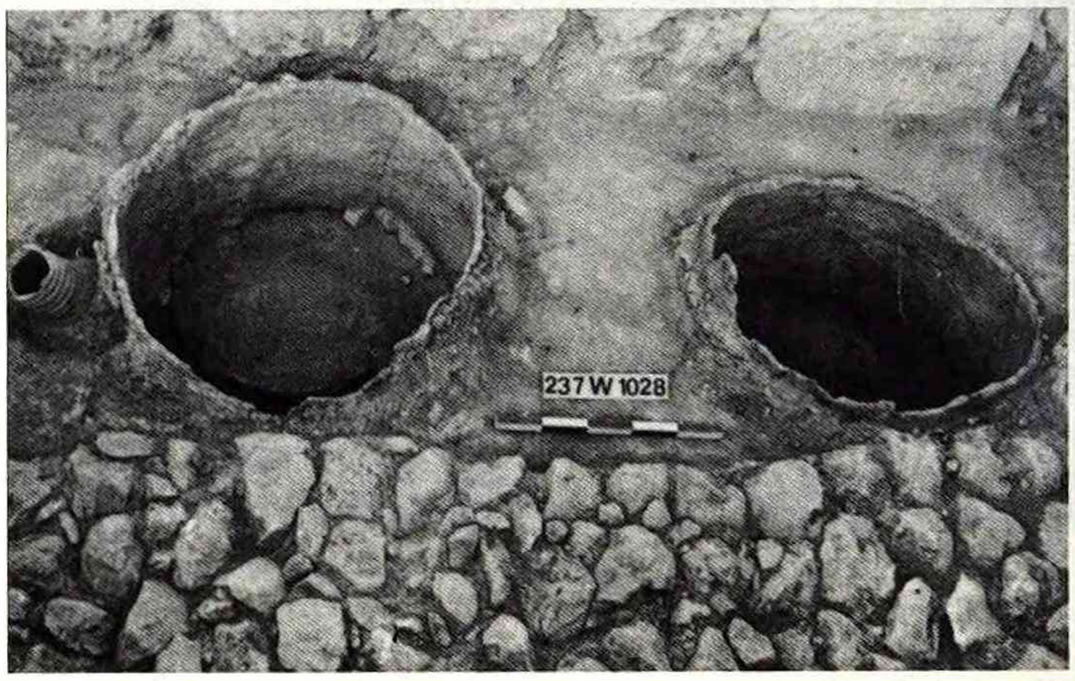
417[*a*] *Antipatris* (ancient biblical *Aphek*) had been an important station on the ancient Via Maris since the Early Bronze Age (mid-fourth millennium BC) and has survived through Canaanite and Israelite days up to a few centuries ago. A fort was built at a place then known as Pegai, in Hellenistic times, marking the border between the districts of Samaria and the Plain of Sharon (present area of Tel Aviv and suburbs). John Hyrcanus conquered it in about 132 BC. It was then known as Arethusa; both names indicated that it was built near abundant sources of water. Arethusa was rebuilt after the conquest by Pompey (63 BC). Herod built a new city there and renamed it Antipatris after his father Antipater, and it grew into an important commercial center with its many prosperous villages. Several digs have disclosed remains from the Bronze Age; the prosperous Canaanite royal city of Aphek; the Israelite town; the Roman period of Antipatris; the remains of a Crusader castle; and, finally, a Turkish fort, which was constructed on top of these remains. It is interesting to note that the Judaean mineral, Nitrate of Antipatris, was extracted and processed on that spot.

418[*b*] *Phasaelis* lay north of Jericho and its erection thus transformed a formerly wild tropical area into a productive area of palm plantations (*Antiq.* XVI, 145; XVIII, 31). In his will, Herod bequeathed it to his sister Salome, who in turn bequeathed it to Augustus' wife in true Herodian devotion to the emperor's family (*Antiq.* XVII, 189; XVIII, 31). The site is identified with Khirbet Fasayil, and many remains are discerned on the surface: ruins of large buildings, a palace of about 182.5 × 200.5 m., a temple, and agora (market-place) with small shops. The city'a streets were intersected at right angles, and it was watered via a five-and-a-half-mile-long aqueduct from the River Jordan. Traces of ruined garden walls built of field stones, and many irrigation channels are visible in the vicinity. The Phasael tower in Jerusalem on the other hand commemorates also the memory of his brother. This tower, popularly known as "David's Tower", is built on the stump of the ancient Phasael, a twenty meter cube structure. This base was surmounted by a porch 5 m. high. At its center a second high tower rose up another 20 m. containing living quarters and a bath. The top of the tower was ornamented by battlements, and the whole recalled the famous Pharos lighthouse of Alexandria. The total height of the Phasael was 45 m. Its foundations descend to the rock and slope away to their lower extremity. The stones of the Phasael are typically Herodian, with a double margin and a flat base. Excavations in the court of the Jerusalem Citadel have shown that this tower was inserted into the earlier wall, dating from the Hasmonean period.

9. Foundation of Antipatris, Cypros, and Phasaelis

(417) No man was as devoted to his family as Herod. In memory of his father, he built a city in the fairest plain in his kingdom. with an abundance of streams and trees that he named Antipatris [*a*]. He rebuilt the walls of a fortress above Jericho very solid and beautiful and dedicated it to his mother under the name of Cypros. (418) To his brother, he dedicated the tower in Jerusalem that took his name; its appearance and splendid proportions will be described later in this work. He also founded another city in the valley to the north of Jericho and called it Phasaelis [*b*].

A large baking house found in the industrial quarter of Antipatris dating to the Herodian period



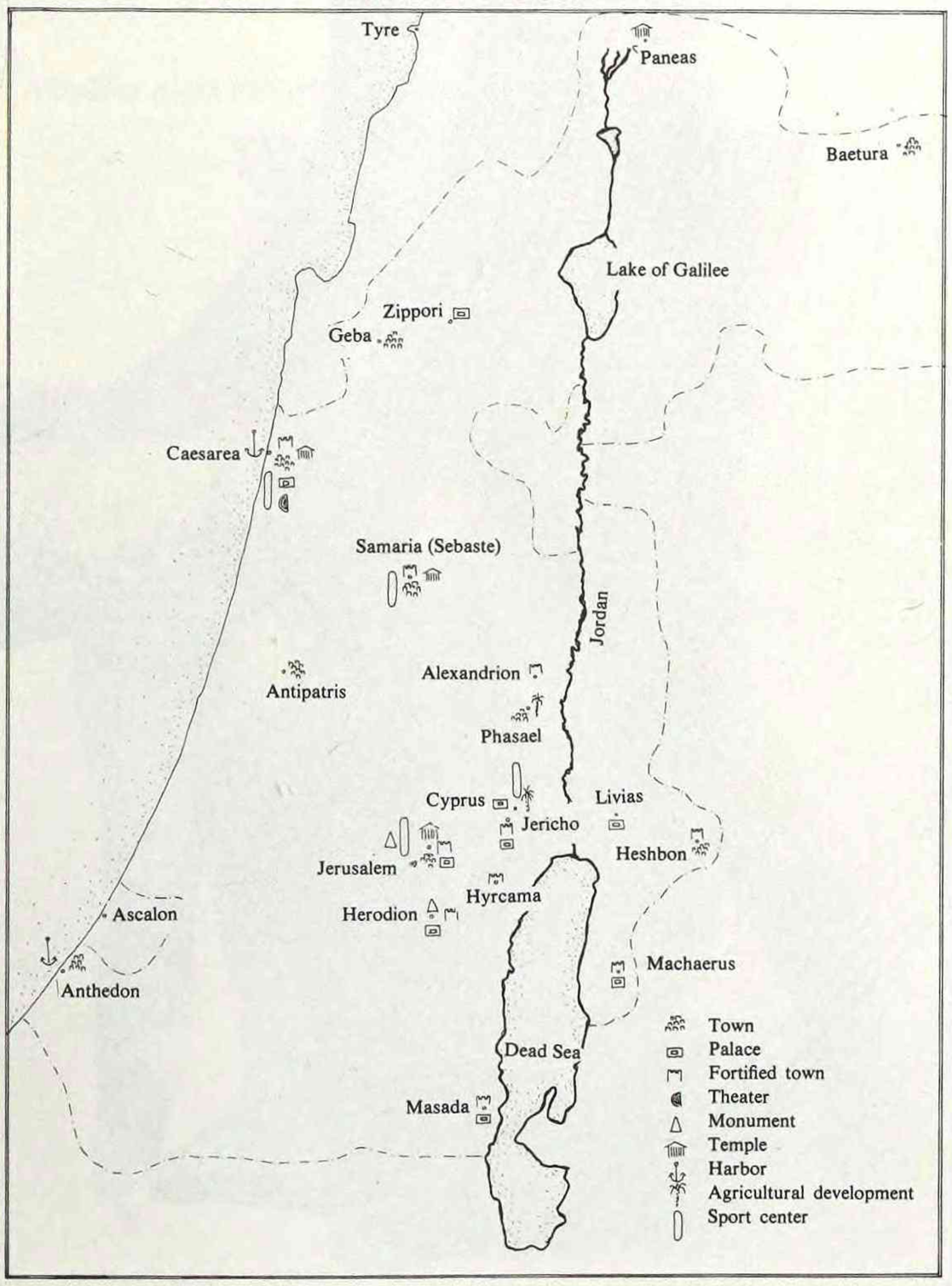
Roman structures and arched opening of a building

The Phasael tower, described in commentary note 418[b]

10. The monuments of Herodion

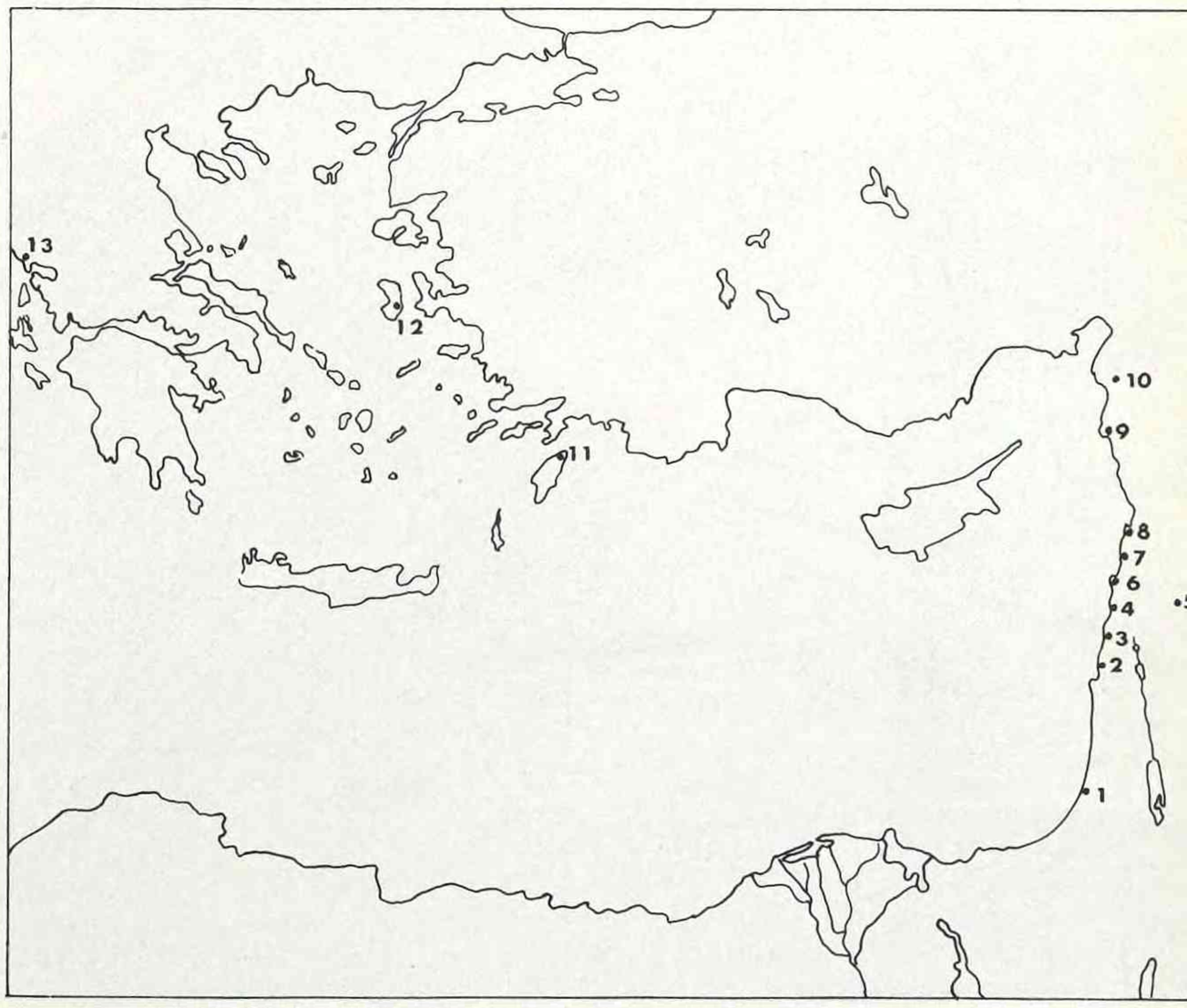
(419) Having immortalized the memory of his family and friends, he did not neglect to ensure his own memory for posterity. Thus he built a fortress in the hills facing the Arabian frontier and called it Herodion after himself [*a*]. To an artificial conical hill situated sixty furlongs [*a*] from Jerusalem, he gave the same name but decorated it more elaborately. He crowned the crest with a ring of round towers. (420) The enclosed area contained splendid palaces, not only with magnificent looking inner apartments, but with equally magnificent outer walls, fortifications and roofs—upon all of which he lavished profuse wealth. He spent large sums to bring an abundant supply of water from a distance [*b*]; providing an easy ascent by carving two hundred steps of the whitest marble as the mound was of considerable height, though entirely artificial. (421) He erected also other royal apartments around its base to accommodate his furnishings and friends. And thus, possessing all these ample resources, this fort would seem more like a town, but it resembled a palace as a result of its compactness.

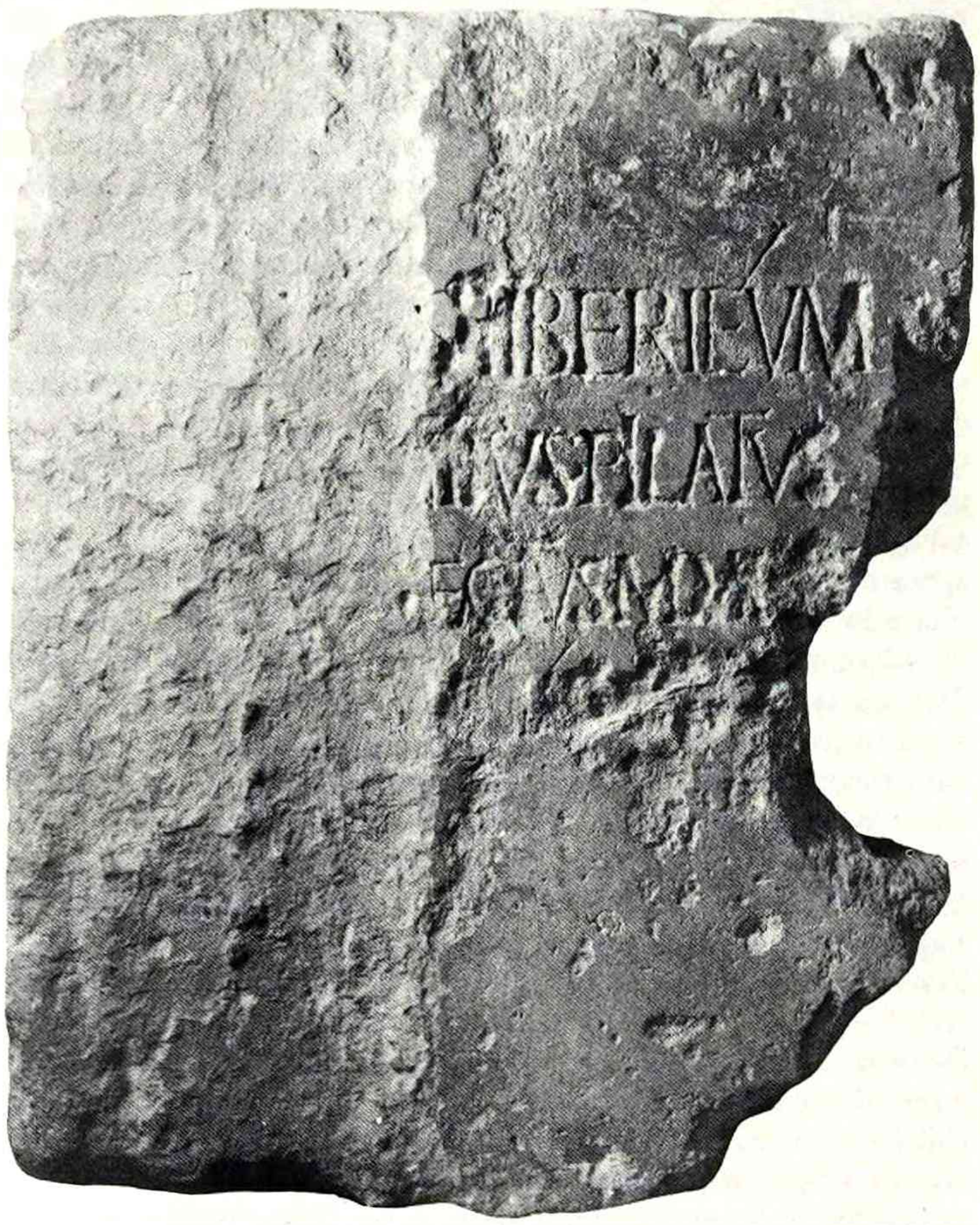
Herod's generosity extended also to cities in the eastern part of the Roman empire



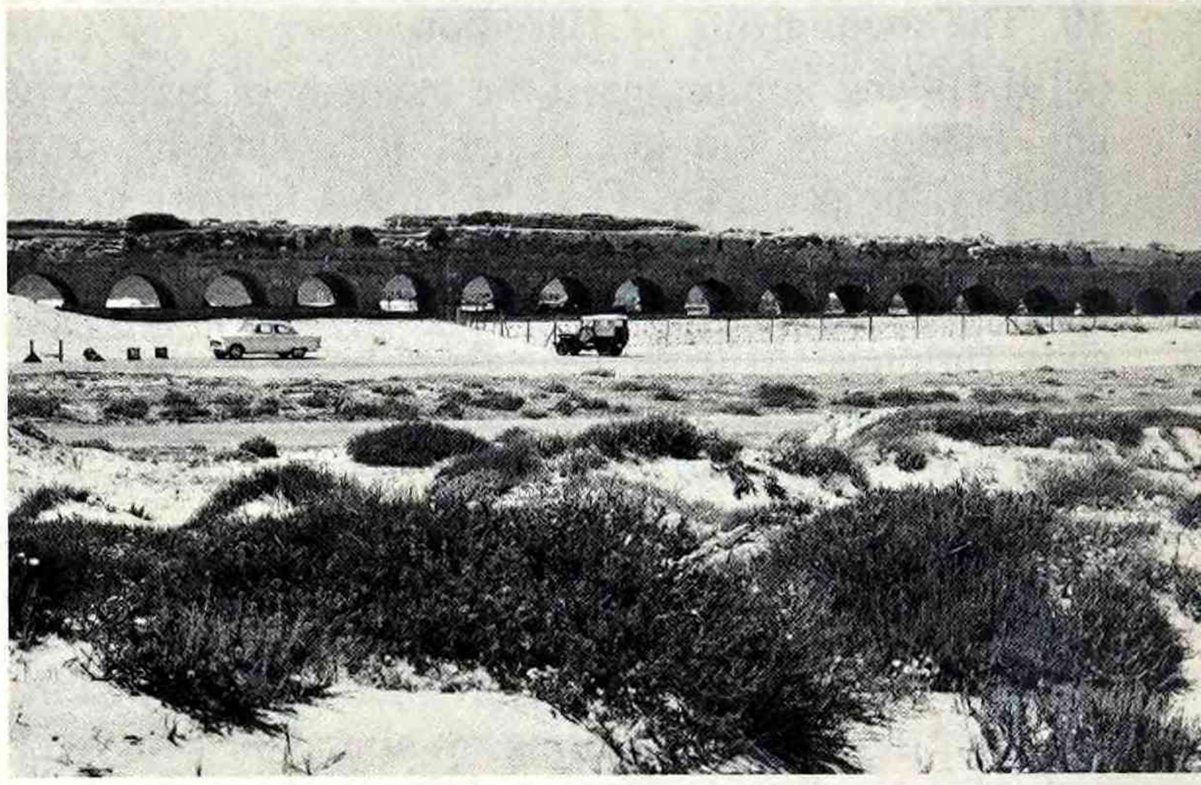
419[*a*]–420[*b*]. *Herodion* The complex constructed in the 30's BC was designed to serve a three-fold purpose: that of royal center, fortress and tomb of the builder ruler. It is without doubt one of the high points of building in his time. It was situated 12 km south of Jerusalem and 5 km east of Bethlehem. Its center was a hill rising 750 m. above sea level. At the heart of this royal center rose a circular structure composed of two concentric masonry rings with an outer diameter of 62 m. The corridor formed between the two rings of walls is 3.5 m. broad with four towers, one 18 m. in diameter, on the east was round and three semicircular ones projected from the outer wall and faced the other three cardinal points of the compass. The strong and lofty circular walls and towers were partly built over a system of vaults which helped to extend the area of the hill. The structure, uniquely planned, was covered to its entire height of 12 m. by an earth and stone smooth mound to give it the appearance of a vast tumulus—Herod's mausoleum. The covered entrance-passage was set within this mound and ascended from the foot of the hill to the enclosed area within the circular structure of the palace. This area is divided into equal parts. In its eastern half, at the foot of the round tower, a garden was laid out, surrounded by a Corinthian peristyle and enhanced by couches and recesses for conversation. Its western half contained a *triclinium* measuring 15×11 m., some adjoining rooms and well-appointed baths to the north-west and east with a mosaic pavement and paintings of water fowl. The stone dressing is typically Nabataean and much use of stucco was made as at Masada (*War* VII, 287) with frescoes imitating multicolored marble. Though Herod was apparently buried at Herodion, no trace as yet has been found of the tomb. However, the synagogue discovered there represents one of the earliest types of synagogues contemporary with that of Masada (*War* VII, 280–303) and Gamla (*War* IV, 4–8). All this was in keeping with Herod's ardent desire to attain honor and glory in his lifetime, as well as to conform to the style of other rulers in the Hellenistic-Roman world and of the Roman elite in the Julio-Claudian period. *Lower Herodion:* A complex of palaces, colonnades and other structures, including storerooms, which have been uncovered at the foot of the hill northward. Josephus speaks of these in his description of Herodion as a complete town with its royal center. Among these buildings is a huge structure measuring 130×55 m. This was an audience hall adorned with pilasters and niches overlooking a hippodrome. The center of the lower area was occupied by a great pool with fountains in the middle. This acted as a focal point in the total design of the area, which, though deep in arid wilderness was covered with gardens.

1 Ascalon 2 Ptolemais (Acre) 3 Tyre 4 Sidon 5 Damascus
6 Berytus (Beirut) 7 Laodicea 8 Gebal 9 Tripolis 10 Antioch
11 Rhodes 12 Vhios 13 Nicopolis





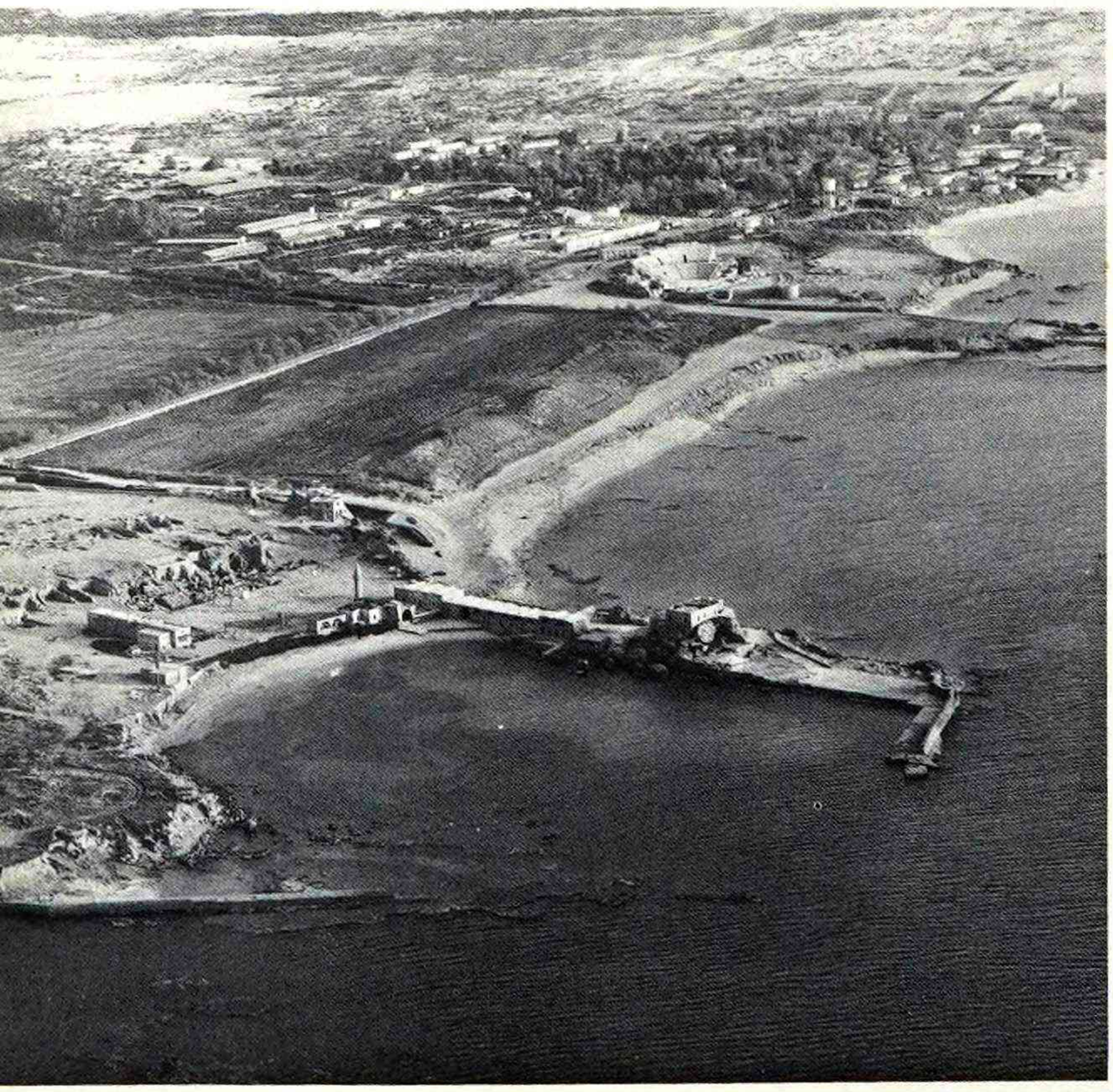
The Pilate stone, described in 415[a] commentary



The upper aqueduct carried irrigation and drinking water from distant springs

The olympic games featured wrestling matches as shown by the bronze group

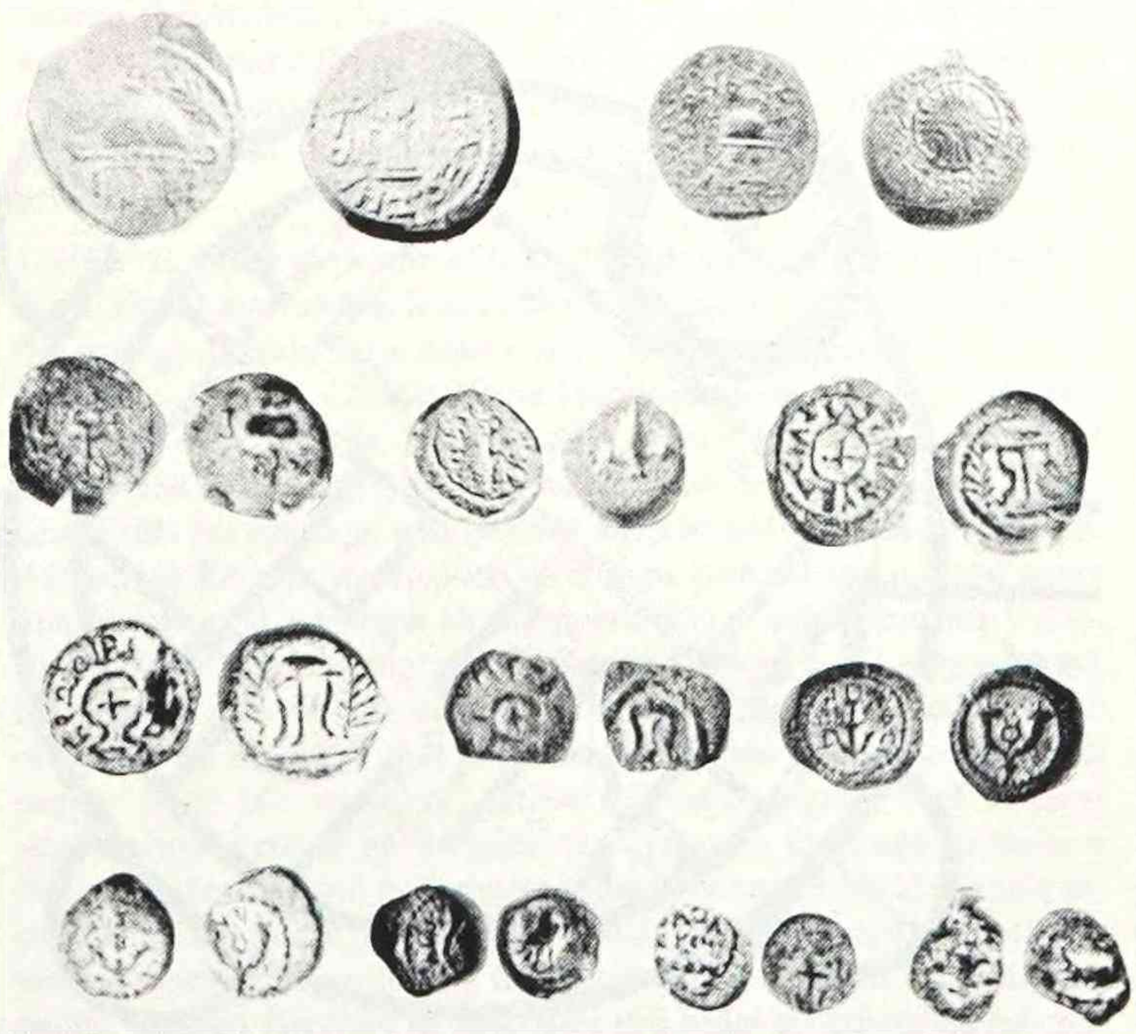
The shore and central area of the ancient metropolis showing the theater (top) and post-Roman harbor area



The later Roman governor's palace, characterized by the headless statues at the entrance

Herodian coinage, contrary to Hasmonean times, is largely aniconic, although Herod introduced the caduceus *surreptitiously as well as some ritual objects, such as the* thymaterion *which could be interpreted ambiguously. Herod introduced an eagle on his small coins, probably to commemorate the eagle on the door of the Temple, which he had put up to the disgust of the puritan Jews.* Archelaus, *Herod's successor, stressed on his coins the fact that he alone of the Herodians had harbors on the sea. Agrippa I took many more liberties with his coins than his grandfather Herod. The mint of Jerusalem struck impeccably orthodox coins with the sun-shade (symbol of royalty) and ears of barley. All the local coins were of bronze, gold and silver being reserved for the imperial mint.*

Moulded glass cup from ancient Caesarea



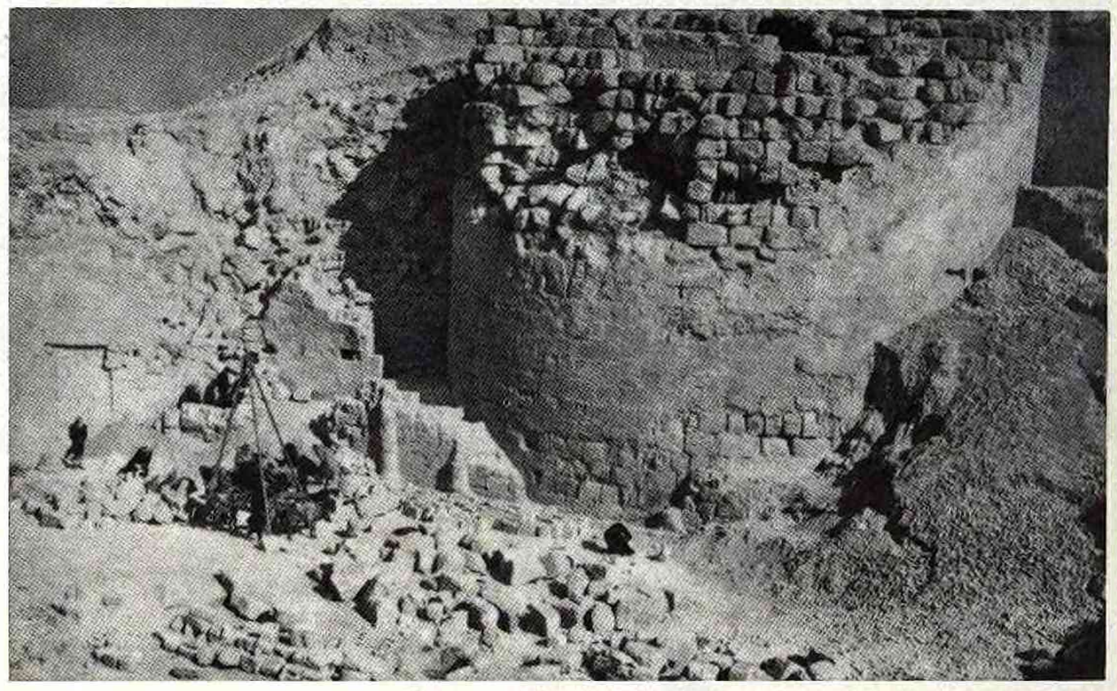
422[*a*]–423[*e*] *What causes influenced Herod to aid and build pagan cities?* The major influences affecting Herod's life and policy were, on the one hand, the extensive changes occurring in the Roman Empire and, on the other, his own comprehension of Judaea's and his place within their system, in addition to the transformation which he sought to bring about in the Jewish kingdom in line with Roman-Jewish interests. Herod's loyalty to Rome derived largely from the fact that Octavian (Augustus) had saved him from his enemies and crowned him "king of the Jews." He regarded Octavian as his "redeemer." Furthermore, Herod's loyalty to the emperor stemmed from two major political factors: a) a recognition of Rome's irresistible and decisive power in the world, to which wisdom alone advised implicit obedience; b) the perception that Rome under Augustus was marked by a sense of achievement, which inspired all the emperor's subjects to feel that he was "the man the world needed." For most outside Italy, membership within the Empire induced a sense of receiving direction from an earthly "providence,"

11. Herod's generosity to other cities

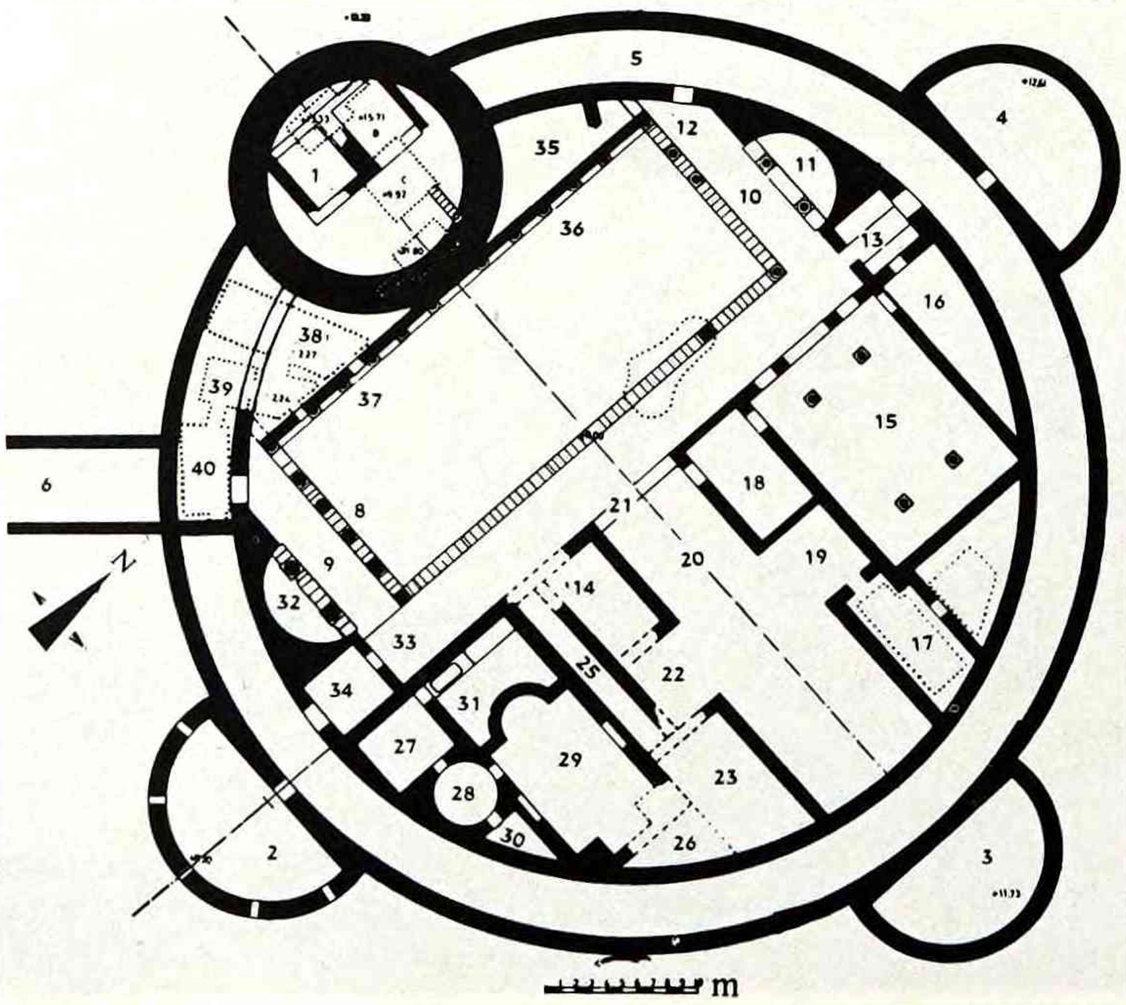
(422) After founding so many places, he extended his generosity to a great many cities outside his boundaries. He provided gymnasia for Tripolis, Damascus and Ptolemais [*a*], a wall for Byblos, for Berytus [*a*] and Tyre, halls, porticoes, temples and market-places. He erected theaters for Sidon and Damascus, an aqueduct to bring water to the coastal Laodicea [*a*]; he put up baths for Ascalon as well as sumptuous fountains and colonnades, admirable alike for their architecture and proportions; on other cities he bestowed groves and meadows; still others received gifts of land as if they were part of his own realm.

Herodion, the crater-shaped mountain palace

The massive foundation of the east tower



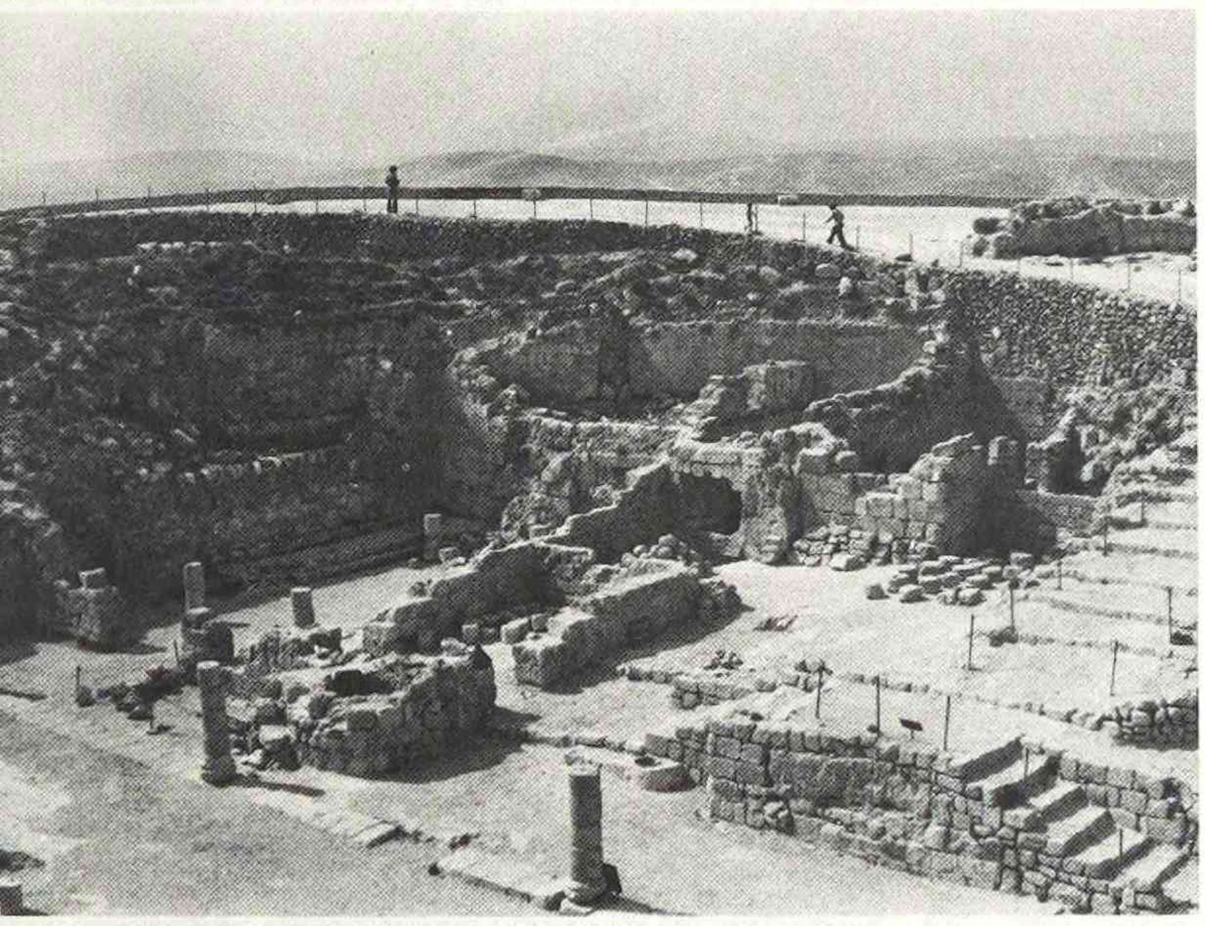
Tomb in lower Herodion—outside the palace-fortress



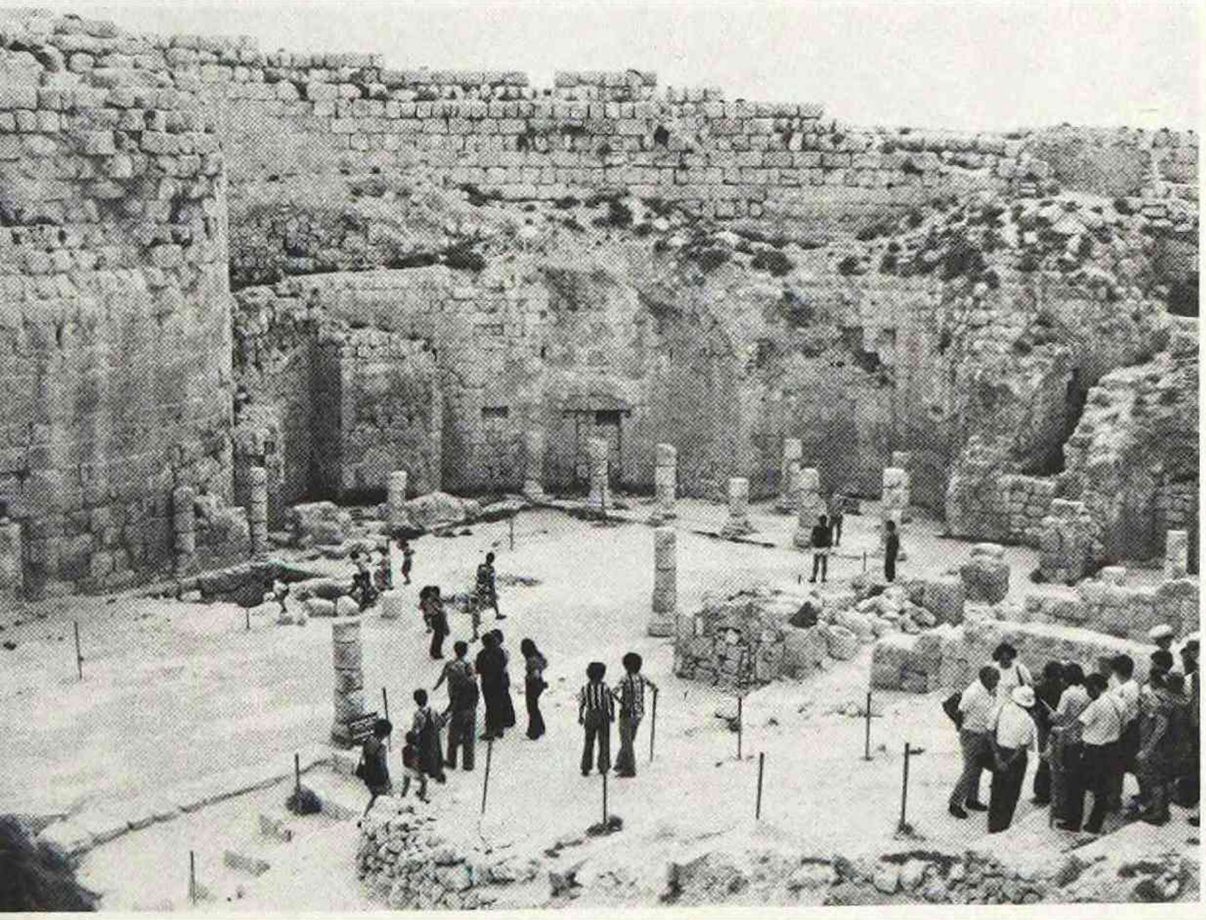
Left: Plan of Herodion:
1. The large eastern round tower
2–4 Semi-circular towers, north, west and south
5 Circumvallation beneath the towers
6 Stairway leading to the palace
8 The peristyle open court bordered by columns
11 and 34 Exedras—columned recesses for conversation near the peristyles
12–13 and 32 Entrances to the vast courtyard
14–18 Inner rooms on columns
19–22 Cross-shaped court

(423) Others, like Cos [*a*], he endowed with revenues to finance the annual office of a gymnasiarch, to ensure that this honorable post might never lapse. (424) He supplied grain to all who needed it and made repeated contributions to the people of Rhodes for shipbuilding [*b*]; and when their Pythian temple was burnt down, he rebuilt it on a grander scale out of his own purse. (425) Need I mention the gifts he gave to Lycia [*a*] and Samos, or estimate his liberality to every district of Ionia [*a*], sufficient for their needs? Were not the Athenians and Lacedaemonians, the people of Nicopolis and Mysian Pergamum laden with his offerings? As for the street of Antioch that people

The baths served also for entertainment



The peristyle open courtyard bordered by columns



which brought justice, security and peace, as well as the means for prosperity. The fact that Herod accepted implicitly the axiom of such absolute loyalty is evident from the influence and teachings of the historian Nicolaus of Damascus, Herod's philosopher at court (and one of Josephus' main historic sources). Herod regarded fidelity to Rome as a moral obligation which bound him no less than the rest of humanity. As the years passed, Augustus' favor towards Herod did not diminish, as we learn from Josephus' account of his reign. The reason may be sought in the sympathy with which he followed Herod's efforts to bring Judaea out of its isolation and turn it into a client-kingdom on which Rome could depend as much, or even more than the others. Herod intended apparently to shape the Jewish kingdom along the norms of progressive Hellenistic states. Whether intentional or not, this policy tended towards strengthening it for the defense of the frontiers of the Roman Empire.

Herod and basic Jewish beliefs The progress of this hellenization can been seen in almost every aspect of his state's life, as most traces of Jewish theocracy were systematically swept away. Although the basic Jewish belief in the "Kingdom of God" was not a matter of state which occupied Herod's mind, nevertheless many people tenaciously held on to the teachings and beliefs in the eventual coming of the Messiah. They were not dependent on Rome, the pagan power *par excellence*, but on the Kingdom of God that would soon arrive and whose influence ranged far and wide, beyond that of earthly kingdoms. True believers held that, as in the days preceding the Hasmonean rising, so even now, it befitted the Jewish people to make an independent stand far from the spiritual realm of the other nations, to isolate itself, and to attune its heart to a life of holiness and moral integrity until the End of Days and messianic times.

The Herodian Court Herod's court did assume a Hellenistic character at all levels and the customary Hellenistic titles: *kinsman, comrades, friends* were all introduced (and we find them in Josephus' text). On the model of the Hellenistic kingdoms too was the new private Council of the king, the *Synedrion*, that took over all the political and budicial powers of the older assembly (*Knesseth Gedola* in Hebrew, see 209[*a*]) whose competence was now strictly limited to jurisdiction over religious matters. Herod's strong inclination for Hellenistic civilization in its various manifestations can be understood against his background of ramified connections with the Greek-speaking Mediterranean world, and through the systematic attitude towards Hellenism, which characterized the Roman Empire during that period.

One may deduce from Herod's pragmatic reasoning and the underlying political-cultural grounds, that positive isolation from the Greco-Roman world and resistance to outside influence would be dangerous and could undermine the very existence of his kingdom; it could not achieve its goal except by participating in Rome's "universal" mission; and, if it could not or would not fulfill this duty, it would lose its right to independence within the Roman *imperium*. This is one of the major reasons that impelled him to expand the contacts between his kingdom and the Hellenistic-Roman world. He expressed this policy in his own typical and generous fashion and in liberality to the various cities of the Hellenistic world. In short, it was a policy dictated by political expediency.

424[*b*] It will be remembered (see 280) that the shipbuilders of Rhodes aided Herod by building him a boat very quickly. His bounty reached the Aegean Islands, Asia Minor and the Greek mainland.

425[*a*]–[*c*] *Lycia... Ionia. Herod identified the idea of his state with the Greco-Roman realm* The formal recognition as a "friend and ally of Rome" had become his guiding principle, according to A. Schalit. It suggested that his kingdom had become an indivisible part of this civilization whose aim was the creation of a single political and cultural entity that absorbed and merged all the political and racial elements it consisted of. This was its supreme destiny and Herod could only establish his kingdom on a permament basis by bowing to its imperial dictates and removing the obstacles that Jewish tradition had erected to isolate its people from the world of nations. Israel's religious and cultural isolationism, dictated by its faith, represented a challenge to Rome's destiny in the East and its persistence could endanger his kingdom's existence. It could only survive by adapting itself to Rome's political pattern or, otherwise, lose its right to exist and enjoy its rights in the Roman realm. He tried therefore to concretize this belief by expanding his con-

tacts with the Greco-Roman world and following the example of other Roman grandees, namely in grandiose assistance to Hellenistic cities which were in need of help, as described by Josephus. (His acts of royal munificence covered a variety of cities [see map].)

425 *Herod's munificence in Judaea proper* In all these demonstrations, Herod's fidelity to Rome *per se* was implicit; it became open and explicit where the works were in the nature of homages: the imperial house at Caesarea, at Sebaste and Paneion; in the *portus Augusti* at Caesarea; or in the contribution towards the building of Nicopolis (Emmaus) which Augustus had founded in 30 BC to commemorate Actium. However, there were still more important aspects to this loyalty, and they found a Hellenistic expression when Herod in 17 BC made his subjects take an oath of allegiance to himself. Some ten years later, the name of the emperor was given the first place in this oath (*Antiq.* XVII, 42). Finally, the new cities that he erected in his own kingdom such as Caesarea and Sebaste were settled by his non-Jewish soldiers (and later by the Samaritan sectarians living in the region). The establishment of such cities tended to increase the gentile population both in the new cities he founded and possibly in the peripheral areas of Galilee and Transjordan. We have discussed the result of such a policy in Galilee (see 204: What caused the rebellion in Galilee?) with its subsequent hunger for land and with unemployment in the rural areas. In this sense, Herod failed to correct the imbalance caused by the policy of Pompey and Gabinius (see 162[*e*]–170[*a*]).

425[*b*] Approximately four km.

426[*a*] Herod's generosity was prompted by the depressed state of the Olympic games because of the lack of funds. He was rewarded by his appointment as *agonothetes* of the Olympics and was very proud of the title that "promoted" him from the category of "barbarian", i.e. a non-Roman or non-Hellene, to the envied status of a "Hellene." This made him a proud member of the Hellenistic-Roman ruling class.

429[*a*] These wild asses (*asinus hemispus*) abounded in Syria and occasionally could be observed in the south (Negev) of Palestine.

431[*a*] Josephus now reverts to previous major events in Herod's life following his capture of Jerusalem and his journey to meet Octavian.

432[*b*] See 241[*a*], Herod's attitude to the Hasmonean dynasty.

432[*c*] About 35 BC. The tensions in the court and subsequent tragedy are related and commented on in 438[*a*]–444[*d*].

433[*d*] See 260.

434[*e*] (See 120[*f*]–122[*a*], concerning Hyrcanus' abdication in favor of Aristobulus). Herod's motive in releasing him from his Parthian exile was to remove any danger of his eventual claim to the crown. This provides decisive proof of his deadly opposition to the Hasmonean dynasty. At the beginning of 30 BC the aged Hyrcanus fell victim to suspicion of conspiring with Malichus, according to the official version (mentioned in *Antiq.* XV, 165–173) "...and these charges were a pretext invented by Herod."

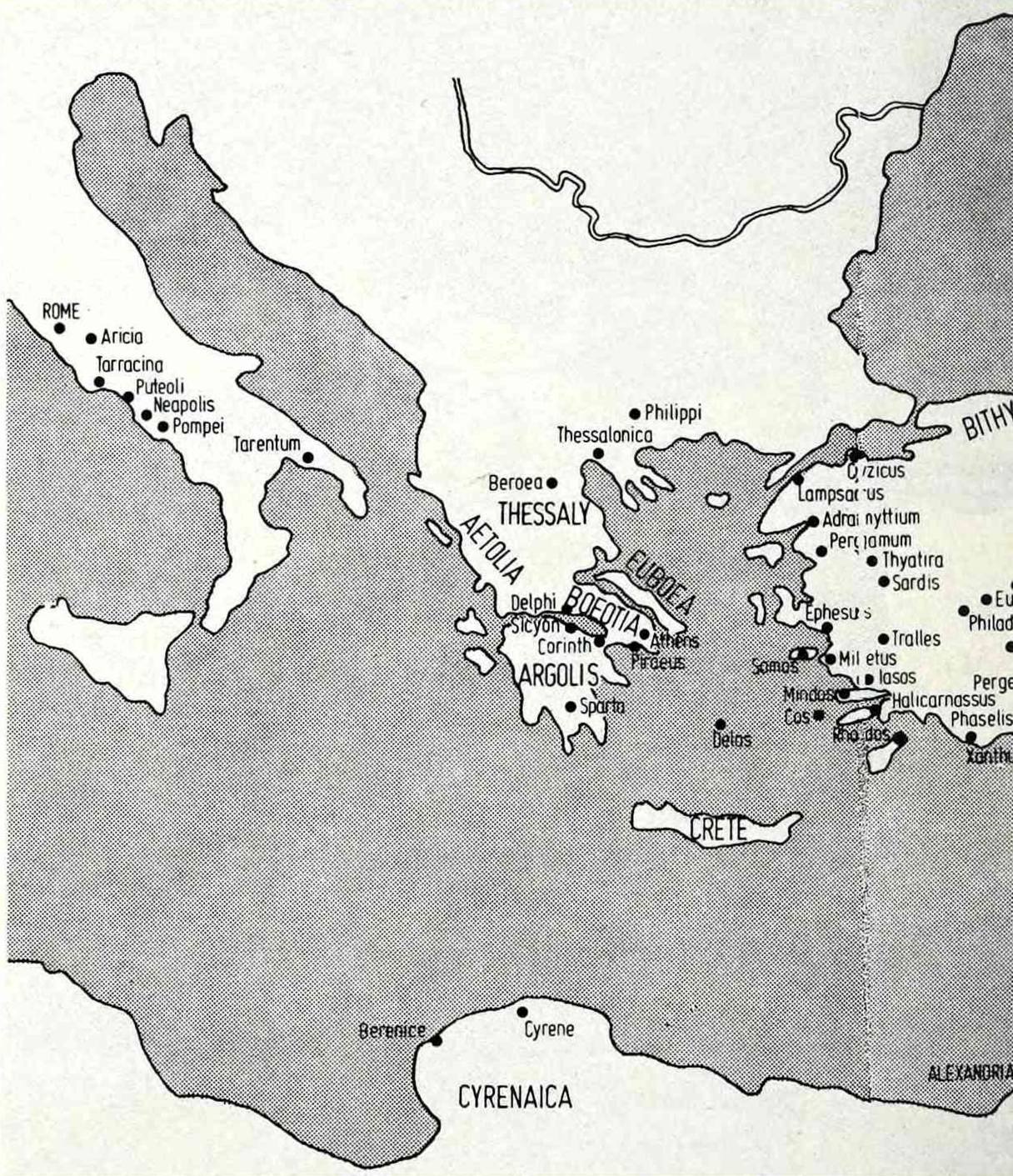
435[*a*] Shlomzion and Cypros.

435[*b*] Alexander and Aristobulus.

437[*c*] *Herod's plot and Jonathan's murder in the bathing-pool of Jericho* After crushing the aristocracy of the land and killing members of the Sanhedrin Herod found the problem of the high priesthood more difficult than ever. It involved not only his relations with the few surviving Hasmoneans but also indirectly with Mark Antony and Cleopatra. Consequently, he set about craftily plotting the destruction of that theocratic form of government which for centuries past had seemed in Jewish eyes to be the only lawful one (see 109). He required a high priest of insignificant personality, a member of the Aaronid-Zadokite high priestly line or any other recognized *priestly family*; this would provide him with the legitimacy he needed for the change. Herod found his man in Hananael, a priest who came from or was descended from the Babylonian diaspora (as defined in *Antiq.* XV). Opposition to this appointment broke out at once from the Hasmoneans and pro-Hasmoneans at court. His mother-in-law, Alexandra, wanted the nomination for her seventeen-year-old son Jonathan Aristobulus, who was of genuine Hasmonean descent and apparently the candidate through whom the Hasmoneans were trying to recover their lost position. Alexandra contrived to interest her old friend Queen Cleopatra in Aristobulus (37 BC). Josephus relates in (*Antiq.* XV, 43–49) how Herod, ever watchful, kept her under guard; but Alexandra would not forgo her intrigues with Cleopatra and shunned because of the mud, was it not Herod who paved twenty furlongs [*b*] of it with polished marble and adorned it with a portico from end to end to keep off the rain [*c*]?

12. (426) It might be suggested that all these benefits were enjoyed only by the particular communities favored; but his generosity to the people of Elis on the other hand was a gift not only to Greece in particular, but to the whole world extending as far as the fame of the Olympic games spread [*a*]. (427) Seeing that this sole relic of ancient Greece was declining and sinking into decay, due to lack of funds, he not only acted as president for the four-yearly celebrations, which coincided with a visit he was making on his voyage to Rome, but also endowed them for all time with an income big enough to preserve an unfading memory of

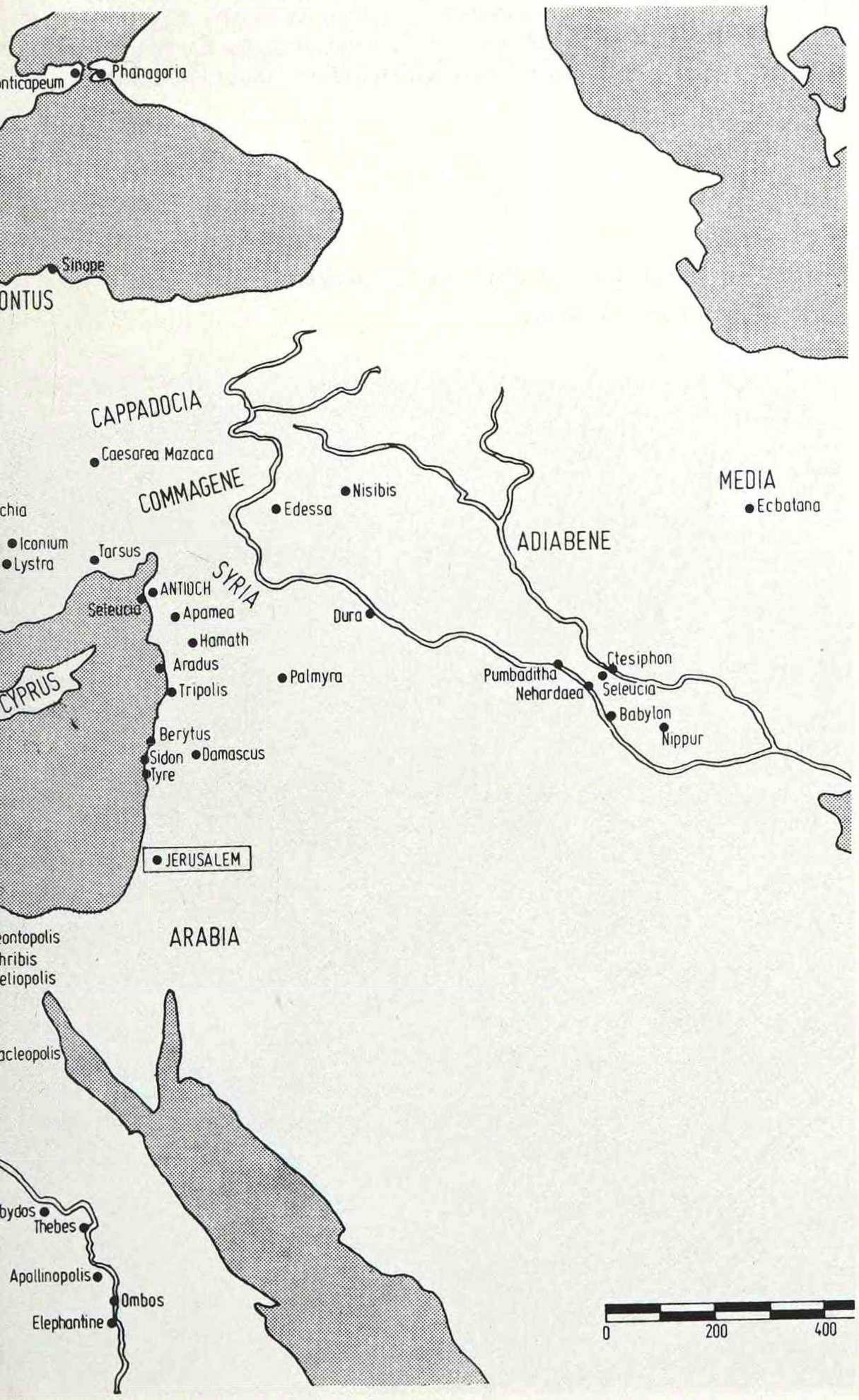
The Roman empire, eastern section, and also large centers of the Jewish diaspora



his term as president. (428) There would be no end to a list of debts and dues he discharged, as was the case when he relieved the people of Phasaelis, Batanaea and various minor towns in Cilicia of the burden of their annual taxation. Very often, however, his generosity was frustrated by fear of arousing jealousy or the suspicion of entertaining an ulterior motive for doing more for the foreign cities than did their own masters.

13. Herod's physical stamina

(429) Herod's power of mind was matched by his bodily strength. He was always foremost in hunting in which he distinguished himself, especially, as an accomplished horseman. On one occasion, he brought down forty wild beasts because not only, does the country breed wild boars, and stags but also wild onagres [*a*] in abundance. (430) He was an incomparable fighter, and on the training ground, spectators were often struck with astonishment at his precision in javelin throwing and in the regularity with which his arrows found their target. Moreover, besides these outstanding gifts of body and soul, he enjoyed the best of luck; he rarely suffered reverses in war, and if he did he was not to blame; they were due either to treachery or to the rashness of his soldiers.



F. HEROD'S DOMESTIC TRAGEDY

Chapter XXII

1. (431) But as retribution for his public successes, fortune afflicted Herod with troubles in his own house [*a*]; his ill-fated career began with a woman whom he loved passionately. (432) For at the start of his reign, he had discarded the wife whom he had married when he was still a commoner, a native of Jerusalem, called Doris, and wedded Mariamme, the daughter of Alexander, son of Aristobulus [*b*]. It was on her account that discord soon arose in his house, and grew worse soon after his return from Rome [*c*]. (433) In the first place, for the sake of his children by Mariamme, he had banished from the capital his son, Antipater, whom Doris had borne him, and had permitted him to visit it only for the festivals alone. Secondly, he had put to death on suspicion of conspiracy against his life Hyrcanus, Mariamme's grandfather, on his return to Herod's court from Parthia. Hyrcanus had been taken prisoner by Barzapharnes, when he overran Syria [*d*], but he had been ransomed from prison by the compassionate Jews who lived beyond the Euphrates. (434) If only he had taken their advice not to cross the river to Herod's realm, he would not have perished so tragically. However he was lured to his death by the marriage of his granddaughter, a union upon which he relied for protection, and his inability to withstand his longing for his native land. He provoked Herod, not by claiming his throne, but because the throne was actually his by right [*e*].

2. (435) Mariamme bore Herod five children, two daughters [*a*] and three sons. The youngest son died in the course of his education in Rome; Herod gave his two elder sons [*b*] a princely education, both out of regard for their mother's illustrious parentage, and because they were born when he was King. (436) Yet the cause which influenced him more in their favor was his passionate love of Mariamme which consumed him more fiercely every day, blinding him to the ill-fortune his beloved was bringing upon him; for Mariamme hated him as fiercely as he loved her. (437) She had sufficient reason to hate him because of his past deeds and could be outspoken because of her hold upon him. She openly held him responsible for the fate of her grandfather and brother Jonathan [*c*].

with her help concocted a scheme for a "flight" of Aristobulus to the coast, whence he would be taken to Egypt. This, with a short stay in exile, was apparently intended to smooth the way for his return as a candidate for the throne in Judaea. The plot was thwarted, however; Herod did not take revenge on Alexandra as his real intention was to strike a blow at her son at the most opportune moment. This came with the feast of Tabernacles (*Succoth*) of 36 BC when the king saw the festive crowds welcoming Aristobulus with cries of joy and undisguised affection, while officiating at the Temple in ceremonial garb. Herod could not strike directly as this would have been much too obvious. It could have aroused the people against him and, besides, it could possibly have been regarded by the Romans themselves as an attempt against the sacred divinity that protected the Jews through their high-priest and might incur offense. Moreover, "it seemed to him that he would be more likely to have his real motive escape attention if he did not act at once, or immediately after what had happened" (*Antiq.* XV, 49). Therefore, while he was celebrating the feast at Alexandra's palace in Jericho, Herod gave his people secret orders to drown Aristobulus in the Hasmonean-built bathing-pool during a light-hearted game among the bathers. The text of *Antiq.* XV, 53–56 appears to be more historically exact than that described in *War*, 437.

437[*d*] The drowning episode is especially significant in the light of recent archaeological evidence (see description and illustrations of Jericho). It confirms that the Hasmonean residence at Jericho continued to be occupied during the early part of Herod's reign (37–34 BC). We read of two adjoining large pools 3 m. deep separated by 5.5 m. podium covered only to the height of 1.2–1.3 m., allowing people to stand up in the water. "...he (Herod) showed great friendliness to the youth... At first they watched some of the servants and friends as they swam and then, at Herod's urging, the youth was induced to join them. With darkness approaching, as he swam, some of the friends, who had been given orders to do so, kept pressing him down and holding him under the water as if in sport and they did not let up until they quite suffocated him" (*Antiq.* XV, 53–56). Incidentally, the detail about the "Gauls" in the text (437) is an anachronism, as Herod received his guard of Gauls in 30 BC, five years after the murder.

438[*a*] Following this, Herod reappointed his obedient Hananael as high priest. Concerning the antecendents of Hananael and his family Josephus is not definite. At one point in *Antiq.* XV, 22, he writes "...because he (Herod) wanted to avoid appointing a distinguished person as high priest of the people he sent for a rather undistinguished priest from Babylonia, namely Ananel..." According to paragraph 40, Ananel who came from there was of high-priestly family and had long been treated by Herod as "a valued friend." Scholars have long disagreed on this issue. Another enigma attached to this name is the unidentified Tower of Hananael mentioned in ancient sources. B. Mazar still regards the origin of this priestly family as a mystery. However, it must be noted that Herod did maintain friendly ties with Jewish families of high standing who came from or originated in the Diaspora, possibly including that of Hananael. In any case, by appointing the supreme post to the scion of a priest of foreign Jewish origin, instead of honoring a Hasmonean, he intended to down-grade the high-priesthood in the eyes of the people and enhance, instead, the glory of the kingship. This helps to explain his treatment of Hyrcanus II (see 434[*e*]) against whom he took preventive measures. Henceforth, the high-priesthood was to be neither a hereditary nor a life appointment. In the future, Herod would be able to remove the high priest from office or bestow it freely. He was usually supported by several priestly families, the most favored being the House of Boethus (see *War* V, 527).

The sequel was the rising tension in Herod's household. At this point, Josephus indirectly refers to certain developments of a general nature that preceded the tragic death of Jonathan Aristobulus and culminated in Mariamme's open abhorrence of Herod. We must pause for a moment and give thought to the then-current styles of historiography familiar throughout the Greco-Roman world and much in evidence both in Josephus' *Wars* and *Antiquities*. In the present tale, accounted by Josephus, events flow swiftly with the rise of tragedy, gradually reaching an emotional climax. With this in mind, the reader must avoid being carried away by the intensity of the tale and overlook other significant moments that should be subjected to a minute historical analysis: Who,

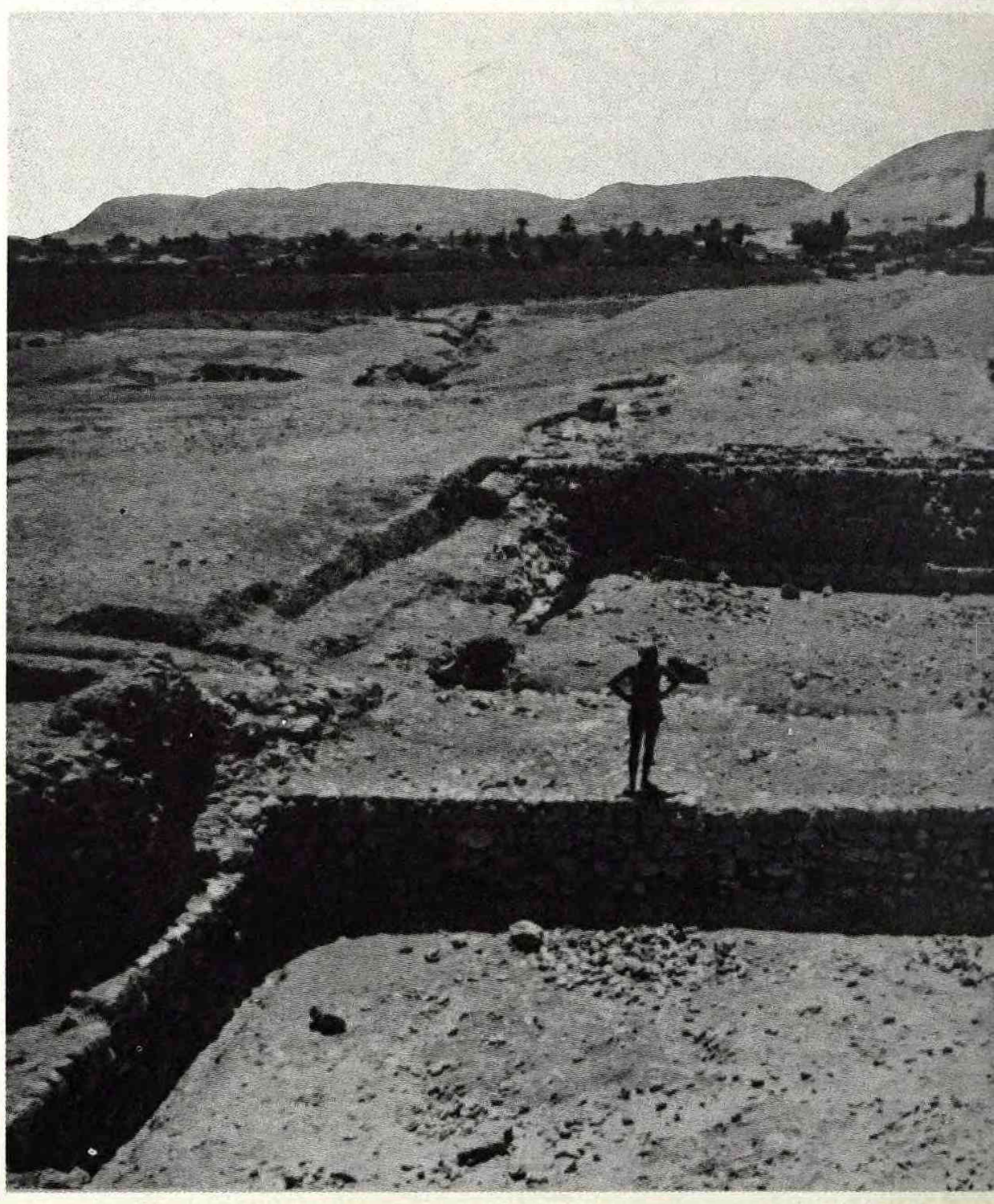
Herod had not spared even the latter, although he was still a youth; he had bestowed upon him the office of high priest when he was seventeen years old, and then immediately had him killed, having observed how the multitude had burst into tears with one accord when the young man, clad in his sacred vestments, approached the altar to perform the ritual. He sent him, by night, to Jericho and there, by his orders, he was plunged into the bathing-pool by the Gauls and drowned [*d*].

3. Rising tension in Herod's household

(438) It was on this score [*a*], that Mariamme cursed Herod and violently abused his mother and sister. But

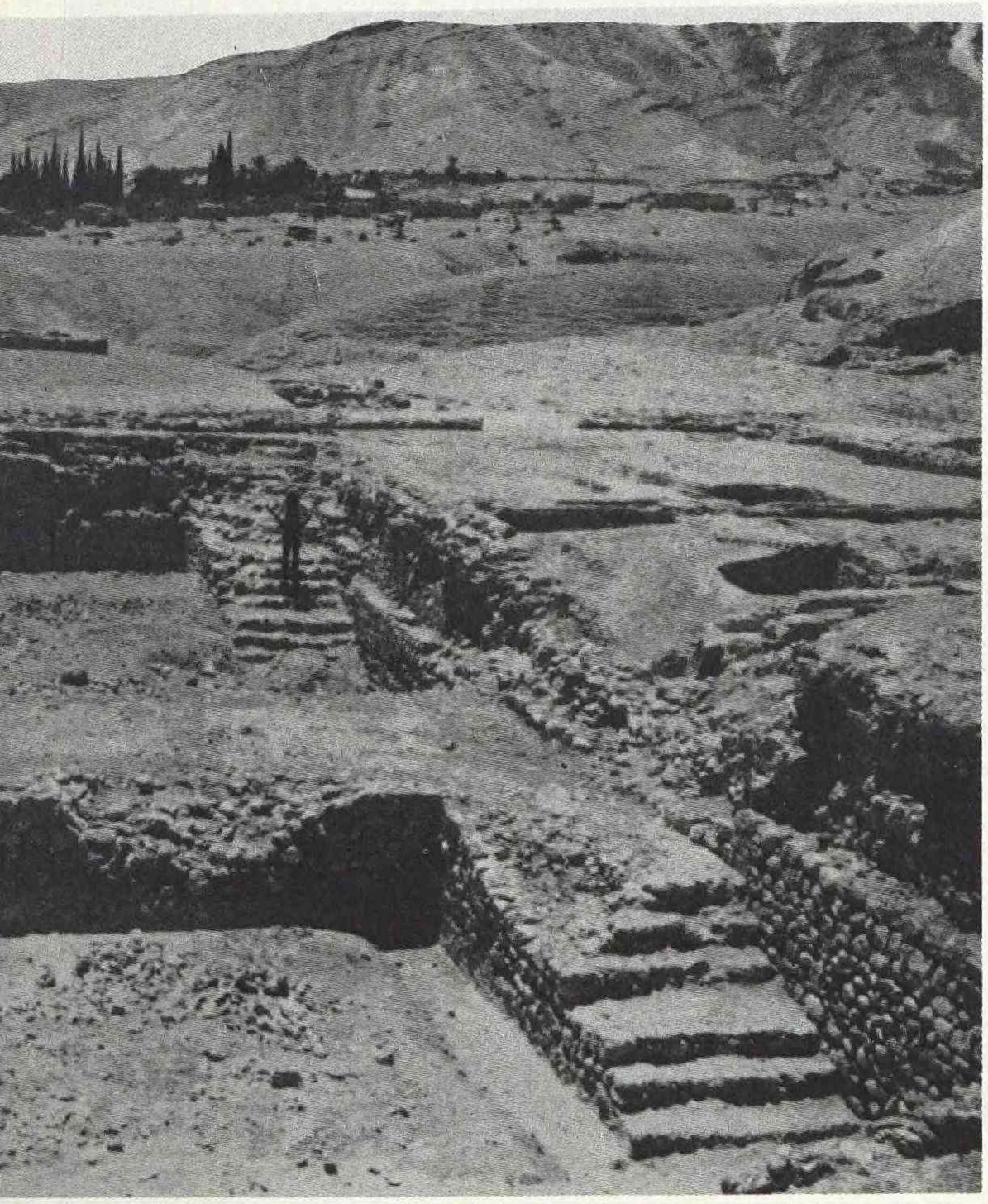
precisely, were the major figures involved in these years of emotional crisis, and what stages preceded the drama at the pool in Jericho? Herod's marriage with Mariamme—initially, a love match—should have given Herod's title a measure of legality in Jewish eyes, no less than in those of Rome, since a son of this union of a king and a Hasmonean princess could inherit the throne of Judaea. The turn of events was to prove otherwise. During the war between Herod and Antigonus, Mariamme and her mother Alexandra identified themselves with Herod the fighter. It is likely that the return of Hyrcanus from his Parthian exile reflected a relaxation in tension between Herod and those Hasmoneans

The Hasmonean-Herodian bathing pool at Jericho, scene of Jonathan's drowning



Herod was paralyzed by his infatuation; the women were furious and accused her of adultery, knowing full well that this was the most effective way of arousing Herod. (439) Among many things they concocted to convince him, they charged Mariamme with having sent a portrait of herself to Antony [*b*] in Egypt; of carrying unchastity to such an extent as to exhibit herself, though at a distance, to a man who was woman-mad, and also powerful enough to get his way by force. (440) Herod was thunderstruck, and in his passionate love, he was tormented by jealousy; his mind dwelt on Cleopatra's craftiness [*c*], which had led to the downfall of King Lysanias and Malchus, the Arab. He saw himself threatened not only with the loss of his wife, but of his own life [*d*].

linked to him by marriage—including Hyrcanus II (see 433–434). The stumbling-block was Jonathan Aristobulus (the third of that name) and his legitimate claims to the high-priesthood. From that point, relations between the king (and his own womenfolk) with Mariamme (and her kin) deteriorated rapidly. The final act in the decline can be dated to the execution of Hyrcanus II, on the charges of having formerly had connections with the Nabatean, Malichus. How this situation of growing tension imposed itself on the inner circles of Herod's court becomes the burden of the following paragraphs 439–440.



439[*b*] *The intrigues of Herod's sister Salome* The details of this story are given in *Antiq.* XV, 25, but are not stated specifically in this corresponding account. Alexandra, daughter of Hyrcanus II and mother of Mariamme sought Mark Antony's intervention to appoint her son John Aristobulus as high priest. Antony's friend Delius, who had come to Judaea on his own affairs was struck by the beauty of Queen Mariamme and that of her brother Aristobulus. He advised Alexandra to "have portraits of both of them painted and to send them to Antony, saying that if he saw them, she would not be denied anything she would ask." Alexandra did as advised. Antony, however, did not consider inviting the Queen to Egypt either because she was Herod's wife or for fear of offending Cleopatra. He invited Aristobulus instead. Herod feared that this might affect Antony's esteem for him adversely and answered that such a visit to Egypt could raise new hopes among the family's partisans and end in riots. Antony accepted the explanation and the visit was canceled. Nevertheless, Herod reconsidered his policy with regard to the Hasmonean family and decided to demote Hananael, the current high priest, and appoint Aristobulus in his stead. The problematic section of the story concerning the portrait arises out of the Jewish prohibition of representing the human figure as a decoration. It is a fact that no human heads or figures are represented on coins of the Hasmonean princes (unlike pagan contemporaries) even though they may have had portraits made for private use. Hence, while the historical accuracy of the events in *Antiq.* may be questioned, the major characters in it can be identified from the story in *War* 438–439. The women who were seething with hatred were Salome (Shalom), Herod's sister, and his mother who sought revenge for Mariamme's insulting insinuations following her brother's murder at Jericho. It was they who fanned Herod's jealousy by accusing her before him of having sent the portrait to Antony to arouse his lust. In any case, he controlled his passions, did not punish Alexandra and bided his time before eliminating Aristobulus, the crown's potential enemy.

440[*c*] The danger represented by Cleopatra was her ambition of regaining the territories formerly held by her Ptolemaic ancestors. It was for this reason that she forced Mark Antony to kill Lysanias, son of Ptolemy Mennaeus, king of Chalcis (southern Syria) and expropriate his land by accusing him of "bringing in the Parthians against... the interests of Rome." (*Antiq.* XV, 92; circa 40 BC.) The case of Malchus was different: In this circumstance, she made Herod defeat this Nabatean king because he had not paid her the rent for the lands which she had taken from him in 36 BC (see 365–368). She would have been even more delighted if Herod and Malchus had worn each other out, leaving her in sole possession of both their realms. Malchus' name or execution is not mentioned in Josephus' general reference to plots against high officials in Syria (see 360) but he is mentioned in this paragraph as a marked victim of Cleopatra, though no allusion is made to his end.

440[*d*] During the critical years when Herod was still uncertain of the fate Antony had in store for him he kept to himself his secret intentions (see 431–437). His caution was due to his knowledge that Cleopatra was apparently bent on repossessing all Judaea; but owing to Antony's reluctance, she managed to regain only the fertile plain of Jericho; furthermore he was still at war with Antigonus and a Hasmonean high priest was still alive. All these facts seemed to Herod to spell the utmost danger. He hid his secret intentions which loom large in the preceding paragraphs 433–437. The violent deaths of Mariamme's brother and grandfather acted as a death blow to her relationship with Herod which was further undermined as a result of his jealousy, a passion fanned by Salome. All this brings the story back to the intrigues at court, as outlined above, and illustrates the background history.

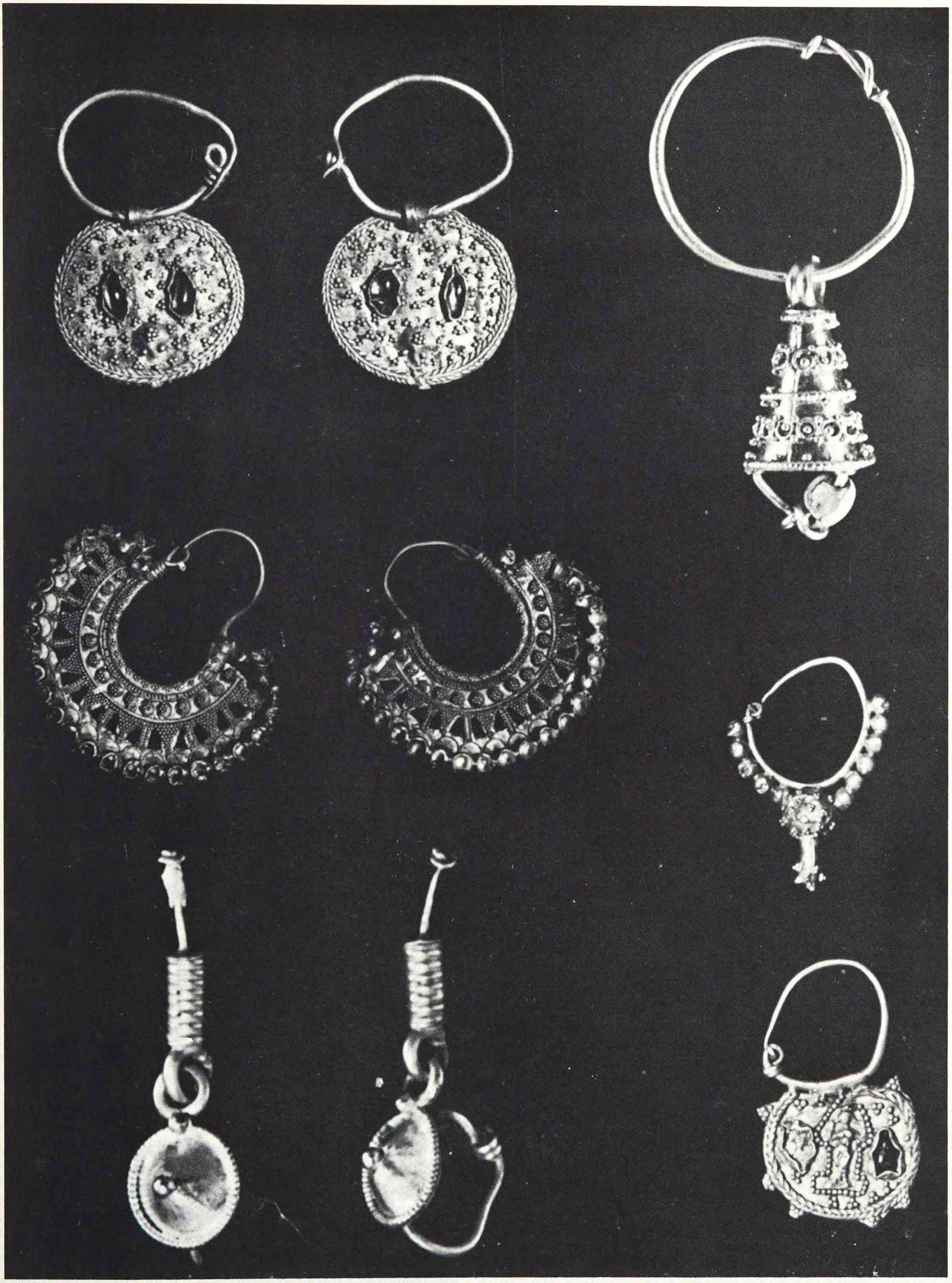
4. (441) Then, on the eve of his procrastinated departure from his realm [*a*], he entrusted his wife to the care of Joseph, husband of his sister Salome, a friend whose loyalty was assured by his marriage ties. He gave him secret instructions to murder her, should Antony kill him. Joseph betrayed the secret to Mariamme, not out of malice but in order to convince her of Herod's passionate love, since he could not bear to be parted from her even in death. (442) When, on his return [*b*], during sexual intercourse, he swore his great love for her, the only woman he had ever loved, Mariamme countered, "You gave fine exhibition of your adoration for me by ordering Joseph to kill me." (443) Herod was beside himself when he heard that the secret had been revealed. Joseph, he declared, would never have disclosed his orders unless he had seduced her. Blind with rage, he leapt from his bed, rushing wildly about the palace in a delirious state. Salome seized this opportunity to slander Mariamme and confirmed his suspicion of Joseph. Driven insane with uncontrollable jealousy, he ordered that both should be immediately executed [*c*]. (444) But his rage quickly gave way to remorse as his fury subsided and his love was rekindled; so burning was he with the flame of desire that he did not believe her dead, but in his affliction would address her as if she were still alive. Eventually, time revealed to him the terrible truth and filled his heart with grief as profound as the love which he bore her while she lived [*d*].

441[*a*] Herod's intended meeting with Mark Antony in Laodicea (35 BC) shortly after the murder of Aristobulus in Jericho was in order to justify himself before Antony. It is also apparent that since Joseph, Herod's uncle, was entrusted with maintaining order in Judaea in his absence, that pro-Antigonus agitation was still rife and that he had not been particularly successful in quelling it. This, we may suppose, was the reason for Herod's eventual punishment of Joseph.

442[*b*]–443[*c*] *Diverse accounts of Mariamme's maniacal murder.* The narrative of Joseph and Mariamme's death is told differently in three instances—*Antiq.* XV, 65–70, 80–87 and 202–239—each episode curiously similar to the other: In the first, Joseph, Herod's uncle alone is executed and Alexandra, Mariamme's mother, is put into prison because Herod suspected her of being the instigator. A corresponding story has Herod entrusting his household into the hands of Sohemus, an Iturean officer who guarded them in the fortress of Alexandrion, instructing him to kill Mariamme and Alexandra should he not return. As is the case in the first and second stories, Herod learned (in the second story) that Sohemus had betrayed his secret and suspected him of seducing Mariamme. He put Sohemus to death and sentenced Mariamme to the same fate after investigating the case. Many scholars believe that the story about Joseph's guardianship of Mariamme that relates to events in 35 BC is no more than a repetition of the story of Sohemus' guardianship which dates to 30–29 BC. They consider the second story to be historically correct; Mariamme was killed only in 29 BC and not five years earlier. The confusion was apparently due to the two sources before Josephus; one was anonymous, dating events to 35 BC; the other was a derivation from the annals of the historian Nicolaus of Damascus which, in general, was reliable. Josephus used both sources but changed a detail in the first. He did not relate that Mariamme was sentenced to death in 35–34 BC but that "she was almost killed" (*Antiq.* XV, 87) and that Alexandra was imprisoned in one of the fortresses. In conclusion, the passions of jealousy which had prompted Herod to behave as he did towards Mariamme in 35 BC were similar and as equally uncontrollable as those that compelled him in 29 BC. On the other hand, Sohemus was summarily executed after Herod's return from his fateful meeting with Octavian. The version in *Antiq.* XV, is that as a result of Salome's accusations that Mariamme had intended to poison him, Sohemus was killed and Mariamme was tried by a court composed entirely of supporters of Herod. She was sentenced to death. If the king had contemplated postponing the death sentence by imprisoning her in one of the fortresses, he was soon persuaded by Salome that this would cause riots. Deciding therefore to put the sentence into effect (*Antiq.* XV, 202–236; *War* I, 348–443), he was subsequently overcome by profound grief and found it difficult to go on living. The execution of Mariamme effectively abolished the official rank of "queen" at Herod's court. She had been regarded not just as one of his harem (he had sent away Doris, his first wife) but as an independent factor representing the rights of the Hasmonean dynasty to the throne. Herod had not taken another wife as long as Mariamme lived, and their children were thus regarded as the heirs apparent of his kingdom.

444[*d*] *Antiq.* XV, 240–251 relates that Herod tried to overcome his remorse by participating in revels, drinking, hunting in the desert and in seeking solitude, but all in vain. Finally, he fell dangerously ill and was apparently on the point of death. In the ensuing panic in the palace, Alexandra considered that the moment had come for the supreme revenge. She could reinstate the family's rights provided she could seize the fortresses, one of which guarded the city, i.e. the Citadel, close to the palace. She tried to win the commanders of the forts to her side but they remained loyal to the king who lay ill in Samaria. One of them, Achiab, a cousin of the king, informed him a few days later of Alexandra's treachery. She was subsequently sentenced to death and executed (*Antiq.* XV, 251); the date was early 28 BC.

Herod's career In 15–14 BC, fifteen years after the tragic events related above, it can be said that at his best Herod fell short of greatness and at his worst he was little more than a creature of cruelty, unconscious fears and suspicions which closed his mind to sound reasoning. It is indeed hard to distinguish throughout all the events of his reign the part played by suspicion and calculation and the part played by passion, even savage passion (compare the marriage and death of Mariamme). Often, he could make reason serve his passion; at other times he could ruin all plans by passion. At its lowest level his desires were for power, glory, pomp and pleasure with occasional flashes of idealistic cravings for Jewish visions. It may be that Herod had recovered from his maniacal murder of his wife and his reign had reached its most brilliant stage: that is the wider and safer borders, unprecedented prosperity, the great construction works mentioned previously and, especially, the years when he enjoyed Augustus' great affection and friendship, as well as that of other aristocrats in Rome.



Jewels of the Herodian period

445[*a*] Mariamme's death left a void in the royal court. Apart from her beauty she had a noble and proud character, a political figure in her own right. She was a Hasmonean princess and symbolized the prestige and hallowed tradition of this royal family (see 241[*a*]). Mariamme bore five children, three of whom were boys. Only two sons survived, Alexander and Aristobulus. They were educated in Rome for a number of years and became clearly integrated with its society and culture, i.e. not necessarily in a Jewish tutor's home and were consequently not attuned to the servile oriental atmosphere of Herod's court. In 17 BC Herod went to Rome to bring back to Judaea his sons, seventeen and eighteen respectively, both of whom were of striking appearance and regal bearing.

446[*b*]–[*c*] Alexander had the more impressive personality of the two brothers, making him more popular with Herod's soldiers. Herod married him to Glaphyra, daughter of Archelaus, the king of Cappadocia in Anatolia. As a consequence of this marriage Herod was able to count upon the help of his in-law who enjoyed great prestige in the East. Aristobulus married Berenice, daughter of Herod's sister, Salome; this gave Salome the fertile ground she needed to exercise her malice.

446[*d*] *A clash of mentalities in Herod's court* Alexander and Aristobulus inherited their mother's proud character which was enhanced by their Roman education, away from the intrigues and customs of the oriental court in Jerusalem with its twisted mentality and harem squabbles (Herod had married a number of times). They were hardly prepared for the obsequiousness and hypocrisies of the king's entourage which was dominated by Herod's kin of Idumaean descent and tradition. The two brothers were open, friendly and uncomplicated in character though arrogant as oriental princes would be. They despised their Idumaean relatives openly as much as they loathed their complex father, whom they had learnt to fear as much as his entourage. Their return to Jerusalem and their popularity provided them with no natural defense against the pitfalls laid by Herod's fawning toadies. Their attitude boded ill for those who helped Herod suppress the surviving Hasmoneans and carry out Mariamme's death sentence. These courtiers, headed by Salome, felt that their lives were imperilled by the brothers especially as the latter did not conceal their grief at Mariamme's fate. They announced in an imperious and ingenuous way their intention of taking revenge on those who had brought about her death. As Josephus puts it, they had all their thoughts upon their lips, saying everything that came to mind without discretion (see 468). They were unable to distinguish between friend and foe, pouring their hearts out to the last people whom they should have trusted in this corrupt circle. They were indeed marked.

447[*e*] As indicated above (see 446) Archelaus' influence carried great weight in the empire and any appeal to the emperor in Rome required the backing of recognized friends in court. With regard to the two innocent-minded princes, most people belonged to the anti-Hasmonean camp.

448[*f*] Antipater, Herod's first-born (son of Doris) regarded Alexander and Aristobulus as the main obstacles to his accession to the throne. The atmosphere at Herod's court was soon poisoned completely and the tension between the feuding parties became the major factor in shaping events within Herod's kingdom. Herod, fifteen years after Mariamme's death, was still attuned to the arguments of the enemies of his two sons. Still fearful of an upsurge in the pro-Hasmonean underground, he decided to draw Antipater close to him so as to

Chapter XXIII

1. The struggle over the succession—the sons of Mariamme

(445) The sons, aware of their father's abominable crimes, had inherited their mother's bitterness. They regarded him as an enemy during the early days of schooling in Rome [*a*] and more so on their return to Judaea. (446) As they approached manhood the antagonism grew. When they reached an age to marry, one [*b*] wedded the daughter of his aunt Salome, their mother's accuser and the other the daughter of Archelaus, king of Cappadocia [*c*]. At this juncture they made no further effort to conceal their hatred [*d*]. (447) Their impetuous speech allowed slanderers their chance and in consequence, certain individuals hinted plainly to the king that both his sons were plotting against him. In addition, Archelaus' son-in-law, relying on the latter's influence, was preparing to flee in order to accuse his father before the emperor [*e*]. (448) Herod, poisoned by these calumnies recalled Antipater [*f*], the son that Doris had borne him, to serve as a counterbalance against his other sons and began to show him preference in every way.

2. (449) This new development was intolerable to the two brothers. As they watched the promotion of the son of a commoner, pride in their birth made them unable to govern their anger and they displayed it openly on every fresh occasion. (450) While they provoked ever-increasing hostility, Antipater was winning even more favor by his own efforts. He showed extraordinary adroitness in flattering his father and concocted various slanders against his half-brothers, some of which he spread himself, while others, at his prompting, were circulated by his confidants. This resulted in his destroying completely his brother', prospects of the throne [*b*]. (451) Thus he was declared heir both in his father's will [*b*] and by his public actions; therefore he was sent on an embassy to Caesar as a prince [*b*] with the robes and all the trappings of royalty except the crown. Eventually his influence became such that he was soon in a position to bring his mother back to Mariamme's bed [*c*]. Thus he coaxed his father cleverly into contemplating the execution of his sons by employing against his brothers two weapons, flattery and slander.

3. The reconciliation in Aquilea and its aftermath

(452) At any rate Herod dragged one of them, Alexander, to Rome to be charged at Caesar's tribunal of attempting to poison him [*d*]. The young man, at last having a chance to bring his grievances before a highly experienced judge, with more shrewdness than Antipater and Herod, modestly slurred over his father's sins but forcibly exposed the charges against himself. (453) He then made it clear that his brother, his partner in peril, was also innocent. He continued

by complaining of Antipater's villainy and of the disgraceful accusations to which he and his brother had been exposed [*e*]. (454) He was aided not only by a clear conscience but also by his great eloquence; he was a very effective speaker. When he concluded by declaring that his father was free to put them to death if he was satisfied that his accusation was true, he reduced all his hearers to tears. Caesar was moved so deeply that he acquitted the accused and brought Herod to an immediate reconciliation on the understanding that the sons should obey their father implicitly and that he should be free to choose his own successor [*f*].

4. (455) The king then left Rome on his homeward journey, to all appearances dismissing the charges against his sons, but still retaining his suspicions. For he was accompanied by Antipater who had inspired his hate but who did not dare to reveal openly his hostility through awe of the reconciler. (456) As he skirted the coast of Cilicia, Herod put in at Elaeus and was entertained hospitably by Archelaus, who congratulated him on the acquittal of his son-in-law and was very pleased at the reconciliation, for he had written to his friends in Rome to stand by Alexander at his trial. He escorted his guests as far as Zephyrion and gave them presents to the value of thirty talents.

5. (457) When he returned to Jerusalem, Herod assembled the people [*a*] and presented his three sons to them. He explained his absence and expressed profuse thanks to God and praise to Caesar, who had set his troubled household in order and bestowed on his sons something more precious than the throne, namely harmony.

Herod's declaration at the reconciliation

(458) "The ties of that harmony," he continued, "I shall knit together myself [*b*]. Caesar has appointed me lord of the realm and judge of the succession, and I will repay his kindness while acting in my own interest. I now proclaim these my three sons kings, and I beseech God first and then you to confirm this decision. They are entitled to the succession, this one by priority of age, the others by their noble parentage; indeed my kingdom is big enough for more than three kings [*b*]. (459) You must therefore defend the three sons whom Caesar has joined together and their father now nominates. Let the honors you award them be neither undeserved nor uneven but in accordance to what is due to each of them; for to pay one more respect than his age entitles him to, would give less pleasure to him than annoyance to the one whom you slight. (460) I shall decide myself which advisors and companions will associate with each of my sons and shall hold them responsible for preserving the peace. For I am well aware that factions and rivalries can be created by the malice of associates while decent com-

counterbalance his two other sons. However, while Antipater continued to flatter his father, Mariamme's sons, as proud inheritors of their mother's royal demeanor, were incapable of such action. On the other hand Antipater had mastered thoroughly the poisoner's art and surrounded the two unsuspecting brothers with spies who reported their every move and complaint, while, at the same time encouraging them to complain further about their father and rant to their hearts' content.

450[*b*]–451[*b*] Antipater was now the potential crown prince. In 13 BC, when Agrippa, Augustus' right-hand man, returned to Rome from the East, Herod sent Antipater with him in order to be presented before the emperor with the aim of winning his support (see 573). While in Rome, Antipater kept a watchful eye on developments in Jerusalem and devised schemes against his half-brothers whose enemies were now openly accusing them of plotting to depose Herod.

451[*c*] The Oriental's subtle way of describing Doris' reinstatement at court.

452[*d*] The king's violent and suspicious temper suddenly broke loose again as it had fifteen years earlier and all the worse because he seemed to love the sons by whom he believed himself betrayed. Indeed, the most pitiable side of his cruelty is just this that he blazed out so furiously against real or suspected treachery in those to whom he was most attached.

453[*e*] From the narrative in *Antiq.* XVI, 91, it is evident that both brothers were taken to Italy. Not wishing to act on his own in this matter, Herod in 12 BC arraigned them before Augustus, who was then staying at Aquilea in northern Italy. The emperor reconciled the two parties. On this occasion Herod presented to the emperor 300 talents, since money was being distributed among the Roman populace during the games that were being held in the capital (*Antiq.* XVI, 130–135).

454[*f*] In a number of places in Josephus reference is made to Herod's having been granted unlimited power by Augustus to leave his kingdom to his heirs in whatever way he saw fit. The truth of the matter is that Antipater only pretended to be pleased but he continued to incite his father. Ultimately, the reconciliation failed to counterbalance Herod's animosity to his sons, as will be seen.

457[*a*] In the Temple, before a solemn assembly.

458[*b*]–461[*b*] The three sons were recognized as "kings"; he proposed that Antipater should have first claim, while Alexander and Aristobulus would rank after him (*Antiq.* XVI, 133–135). This was not at the time a very clearly defined primacy. Antipater was appointed king of the whole realm while the sons of Mariamme were recognized as "kings" of specific regions; each of three "kings", according to this plan was intended to re-establish harmony at court; it could not wipe out Herod's suspiciousness with regard to Mariamme's sons. In his great peroration at the Temple (458–465) he had based Antipater's precedence on the right of birth. This was obviously intended to placate the sages, rabbis, notables and the people at large who would accept it since it conformed to established practice and the *halakha* (hallowed rules of Jewish observance). But according to A. Schalit, it is doubtful whether this was his main motive. It seems more likely that it stemmed from his deep distrust of Alexander and Aristobulus as subsequent events were to prove. His pragmatic distribution of power was also a temporary measure.

462[*c*] Herod was then 61 years old and not "so old."
467[*a*] Herod's plan could not please the two brothers since it put them aside in favor of Antipater. On the other hand, the latter was concerned about his future and afraid that the two brothers might succeed in outmaneuvering him, especially as they were beloved by the people.
470[*b*] Antipater's sole endeavor was to implant in his father's mind the dread suspicion that the two sons intended killing him.
472[*c*] Antipater would appear to excuse his brothers' indiscretions good-naturedly and relate to his father banteringly stories of their glibness of tongue as though this were all a mere laughing matter; but he was in fact instilling subtle poison into receptive ears.
473[*a*] Antipater had Herod's trust and the support of Ptolemy, the chief minister. Salome, Herod's sister, was constantly hostile even though Aristobulus had married her daughter Berenice. She used information she received from her daughter on Aristobulus' views and actions in order to blacken him in Herod's eyes.
473[*b*] Doris, his first wife.
475[*c*] Compare 446[*d*], a clash of mentalities.
476[*a*] Glaphyra was a daughter of Archelaus, king of Cappadocia. Temenus (one of the Greek Heraclidae according to hallowed tradition) gave his name to the Temenidae kings of Macedonia from whom Archelaus claimed descent and which Glaphyra claimed on her father's side. On her mother's side she descended from King Darius, son of Hystaspes, king of Persia.
477[*b*] Ten throughout his reign.

Herod's ladies at court sang and entertained as this Roman lady playing her cithara

panions encourage mutual affection. (461) I must insist, however, that these men for the present, as well as the officers in my army, place their hopes in me alone for I am not now bestowing the kingship on my sons but the mere honors due to kingship. They will enjoy the sweetness of power, but the burden of office, however unwelcome, will fall on me. Let each one of you consider my age, my way of life and my piety before God [*b*]. (462) I am not so old [*c*] that an early end is in sight; nor am I given to self indulgence that can shorten the lives of men even in their prime and I have served God so faithfully that I may look forward to a very long life. (463) Thus, whoever puts himself at the service of my sons, with a view to bringing about my downfall, I shall punish for their sakes as well as my own. It is not jealousy of my offspring that inclines me to restrict the honors to be paid to them; for I know that with too much flattery and attention young people are tempted to be reckless. (464) Everyone who comes into contact with my sons should keep in mind that if he acts honorably he will win his reward from me, but if he promotes division his malicious conduct will bring him no compensation even from the man he is serving. Then I feel sure that all will have at heart my best interest, that is to say that of my sons; for it is in their interest that I should govern and in mine that they should live together without strife [*b*].
(465) "As for you my good sons, think first of the unchanging laws of nature where even the wild animals feel affection for each other. Then consider Caesar who has brought about our reconciliation; finally, of me, who entreats you, when I might command you, to continue being brothers. I present you now with the robes and attendants of kings and I pray to God to uphold my decision that you may live in accord [*b*]."
(466) Thus he concluded. He embraced each of his sons tenderly and then dismissed the assembly. Among these some joined in his prayer while others who hankered for change pretended that they had not even heard it! [*c*]

Chapter XXIV

1. Antipater's devious tactics

(467) When the brothers parted they continued their resentment towards each other and they separated even more suspicious of each other than before. Alexander and Aristobulus smarted at the confirmation of Antipater's rights as eldest; while Antipater begrudged even the rights accorded to his brothers [*a*] though they were second to his own. However, being a man of extreme cunning, he knew when to keep silent and he disguised his hatred of his brothers with great artfulness; while they, proud of their birth, made no secret of their feelings. (469) Moreover, they were surrounded by people who tried to incite them; while a still larger number of the flatterers insinuated

themselves into their confidence to spy on them. Every word uttered in Alexander's circle found its way to Antipater and from there passed with amplifications to Herod. The young man could not make the most innocent remark without being incriminated; everything he said was distorted into expressions of slander, and if he expressed himself with a little freedom, mountains were created out of molehills. (470) Antipater would send agents continuously to incite him on in order to lend his lies a germ of truth. If one item was proved authentic among the reported statements, the rest was taken for granted. On the other hand, his own friends were either very secretive or were induced by gifts to divulge no secrets. It would be correct to describe Antipater's life as a mystery of wickedness. Furthermore, by dint of bribery or seductive flattery, which he found invariably so effective, he converted Alexander's companions into traitors and informers to report all that he said and did [*b*]. (471) Stage-managing everything with great deliberation, Antipater prepared the ways by which the false charges would sink into Herod's ears, himself acting the part of devoted brother, while designating the task of tale-bearing to others. Then, when anything was said to the discredit of Alexander, he would come forward and act his part. He would begin by disparaging the allegation, then he proceeded quietly to confirm it, thus generating the king's anger. (472) Everything was interpreted as a proof of a conspiracy conveying the impression that Alexander was waiting for an opportunity to murder his father. Nothing lent more credence to these slanders than Antipater's appeal on his brother's behalf [*c*].

2. The women's quarrels

(473) Herod was exasperated thoroughly by these insinuations and his affection for the young princes diminished daily while his regard for Antipater increased in proportion. The king's alienation from the youths was shared by his retinue, some following willingly, others under compulsion such as Ptolemy [*a*], the most valued of his friends, the king's brothers and all his family. For Antipater's influence was supreme and the bitterest pill for Alexander to swallow was that of Antipater's mother [*b*]. She, who was more cruel than a stepmother, was in league with him against her stepsons whom she hated the more because their mother was the queen, her rival. (474) One and all, accordingly, now fawned on Antipater because of his dynastic expectations. They were further encouraged to turn against his rivals by the king's command, forbidding those highest in his favor to go near or pay any attention to Alexander or his brother. Moreover, Herod's formidable influence extended beyond his own kingdom to his friends abroad: for no other king had been empowered by Caesar with such authority; it included even the right to demand extradition of a fugitive national from another sovereign state. (475) The young men [*c*], throughout these days, were blissfully ignorant of these slanders, as their father had never openly reproached them. Consequently being off their guard, they exposed themselves all the more to slander; and they gradually became aware of his coldness and growing exasperation whenever anything annoyed him. Antipater also aroused against them the emnity of their uncle Pheroras and their aunt Salome, constantly coaxing and working upon her feelings, as if she had been his wife [*c*]! (476) Her hostility was further stimulated by Alexander's wife, Glaphyra [*a*], who vaunted her noble lineage and claimed precedence over all the ladies at court because she descended on her father's side from Temenus [*a*], and on her mother's side from Darius, son of Hystaspes. (477) On the other hand, she taunted Herod's sister constantly and his wives with their low birth, as all of them had been chosen for their looks, not their parentage. Herod's wives were numerous [*b*] since Jewish customs permitted polygamy and the king was strongly in favor! They all hated Alexander on account of Glaphyra's arrogance and abuse.

3. Salome's denunciation

(478) Aristobulus himself alienated Salome, though she was his own mother-in-law; she was so furious already at Glaphyra's abuse because he taunted his wife continually for her humble origin, insisting that he had married a commoner and his brother Alexander a princess. (479) Salome's daughter reported this with tears to her mother, adding further that Alexander and Aristobulus had threatened that when they succeeded to the throne, they would force the mothers of their stepbrothers to work at the loom with the slave-girls and make the princes themselves village clerks—a mocking allusion to the careful schooling they had received. Unable to contain her indignation, Salome reported the whole story to Herod. Since she was accusing her own son-in-law, she was naturally believed. (480) At the same time yet another accusation was brought to the king's ear adding fuel to the flames. He was told that the young princes invoked constantly their mother, calling curses down on him as they bewailed her. Furthermore, whenever he distributed as he often did some of Mariamme's garments among his newer wives, they threatened that they would before long strip them of these royal robes and clothe them in rags.

4. Herod's admonition

(481) Although Herod had learned from such reports to fear the young men's tempers, he still had hopes of reforming them. He summoned them just before setting sail for Rome and after threatening them briefly for wrongdoing, admonished them curtly as a father, and urged them to love their brothers; he promised to overlook their past offenses if they would henceforth amend their ways. (482) They repudiated the charges,

declared them false and assured their father that they would vindicate their statements by their actions. But he, they added, ought on his side to seal the mouths of these tale-bearers and refuse to believe them so readily; for there would always be persons ready to slander them as long as they found someone to listen.

5. Pheroras and Herod

(483) These words seem to have quickly reassured their father and though this dispelled their immediate anxiety, they felt apprehensive about the future, knowing as they did the hostility of Salome and their uncle Pheroras [*a*]. They were both formidable and dangerous, especially Pheroras, who shared with his brother all the appurtenances of royalty except the crown. He had a private income of a hundred talents and enjoyed the revenue he derived from the whole of Transjordan which he received as a gift from his brother. Moreover, Herod had obtained Caesar's permission to appoint him as tetrarch [*b*]. He had also conferred on him the further honor of marrying a member of the royal family by giving him the hand of his own wife's sister. On her death, Herod had promised him his eldest daughter with a dowry of three hundred talents; (484) but Pheroras rejected the royal wedding as he had fallen in love with one of the maidservants [*c*]. Slighted by this refusal, Herod married his daughter to one of his nephews who was later killed by the Parthians; his resentment however, subsided in time and he made allowance for his love-sick brother.

6. (485) Long before this, while the queen was still alive, Pheroras had been accused of plotting to poison his brother. But now again a great number of informers besieged Herod so that he, though a most devoted brother, was led to believe their statements and began to panic. (486) He ordered many suspected persons to be tortured and came finally to Pheroras' own friends. None of them admitted directly that there was such a conspiracy though they did say that Pheroras was preparing to fly to Parthia and snatch up his mistress, and that his accomplice in this design and partner in his projected flight was Costobarus, Salome's husband. Herod had given his sister to him after the execution of her former husband on an adultery charge. (487) Salome herself did not escape slander; she was accused by her brother Pheroras of pledging herself to marry Syllaeus, the procurator of Obadas, king of Arabia and Herod's bitterest enemy [*a*]. However, though convicted of this and everything else of which she was charged by Pheroras, she was nevertheless pardoned; Pheroras himself was acquitted by the king on any charges laid against him.

7. Terror at court

(488) The storm that threatened Herod's house now turned on Alexander and burst forth about his head with all its violence. There were three eunuchs who

483[*a*] When Salome and Pheroras felt that the position of the two sons had deteriorated beyond repair, they tried once more to rouse Herod beyond endurance and bring him finally to a fatal decision. However this time they tackled Alexander himself and told him that his father coveted Glaphyra and was unable to control his passion. Alexander complained to Herod, whereupon the latter flew into a terrible rage against Pheroras, who in turn lay the blame on Salome. When this veteran troublemaker realized that she had been caught in her own net, she ranted and raved and denied the whole charge. She accused Pheroras of having set up the whole plan because he wanted to punish Herod for trying to induce him to abandon the maidservant with whom he lived after his wife's death, rather than marry the princess Cypros, Herod's daughter by Mariamme. Herod refused to accept this explanation and Pheroras' continual rebuffs, and drove away both his brother and sister in great fury (*Antiq.* XVI, 188-219). A. Schalit makes an interesting suggestion with regard to Herod's matrimonial plans for his family. In so far as Herod was concerned he strove to eliminate all *male* Hasmonean kin, but planned to enhance the prestige of his family by intermarrying with Hasmonean females; in other words attempting to get the best of both worlds.

483[*b*] Herod had obtained the tetrarchy for his brother in 20 BC and it comprised at least a part of Peraea. As a result of proclaiming Antipater as his successor Herod did not manage to restore peace in his household. It would appear that he had motives other than respect for Antipater's birth-right. Pheroras' position was ambiguous.

484[*c*] This refers to the source of tension in Herod's court over Pheroras' refusal to marry Cypros, his life-long devotion to his maidservant and his refusal to give her up. Meanwhile all this quarrelling had sickened the emperor Augustus, who was thoroughly familiar with Herod's colorful career.

487[*a*] *Salome and the Nabatean Syllaeus* A further deterioration in relations at court was occasioned by Salome, aged fifty or over (and Herod sixty). She had realized by this time that her position at court had declined totally. She was then asked by Syllaeus, the Nabatean aristocrat to marry her though he was younger. The women of her entourage who hated her knew of her affair with the Nabatean and made the most of it. The latter had everything to gain from this union, but Herod asked him to convert first. He refused and left Jerusalem in anger, becoming Herod's greatest enemy. Finally, Salome was pardoned by her brother and married the respectable Alexas at Herod's suggestion (*Antiq.* XVI, 228; compare also *War* I; 574–577.

491[*a*] *Terror at court* The king's violent and suspicious temper broke loose suddenly as in former times. The eunuchs' confession caused a crisis at court. Herod lost his self-confidence completely and suspected treachery everywhere. Many persons were put to death; some of the king's closest supporters were dismissed because of their contacts with his two sons. Among these, according to *Antiquities* XVI, 242, were Andromachus and Gemellus; the former's son was a friend of Alexander, while the latter had been in Rome together with Alexander. One of the men tortured had revealed that the two brothers had conspired to kill the king while he was engaged in his favorite sport of hunting. They were then to flee to Rome and request the emperor to make them rulers over Judaea. Even Herod believed that this confession appeared exaggerated.

495[*a*] A more dramatic description of this disarray at court is recounted in *Antiquities* XVI, 258–260.

496[*a*] They key to Herod's morbid state of mind is more easily found in *Antiquities* XVI, 235–244, which concludes: "The cause of all this was Antipater, who on becoming aware of his father's morbidity encouraged him in his delusions, particularly as he already sat with him on the Council. For he believed that he would accomplish his schemes by quietly putting out of the way everyone of those able to oppose him." In other words, having observed his father's morbidity Antipater had concluded that it bordered on insanity (in Latin: *furorem et insaniam*); he used this diagnosis a few years later as his most dangerous weapon against his adversaries. A. Schalit, who dates this phase to the years 9/8 BC, i.e. a few years after Herod had brought his sons back from Rome, observes that Antipater himself was the man who had planted the poisoned seed in his father's mind and that it was he who had led his father on—in previous years—along this dangerous course. As noted in

were favorites of the king and were therefore entrusted with special offices: one was detailed to pour out his wine, another to serve his supper, while the third put him to bed and slept in his chamber. (489) By bribes of large presents Alexander corrupted these menials to have sexual intercourse with him and to minister to his unnatural lust. On being informed of this the king submitted them to trial by torture. They confessed their criminal association with Alexander and then revealed the promises that had induced them to it. (490) Alexander, they said, had enticed them by saying, "You should not rest your hopes on Herod, a shameless old man who dyes his hair, unless this disguise makes you take him for a youngster. Come over to me who is to inherit the throne, whether Herod likes it or not, and I shall settle in the not too distant future accounts with my enemies and bring fortune and happiness to my friends and above all to you." (491) They added also that leading citizens had secretly offered their services to Alexander and that the generals and other officers of the army were conferring with him clandestinely [*a*].

8. Alexander's arrest

(492) Herod was so alarmed by these disclosures that he dared not divulge them immediately; but he sent out spies night and day to investigate all that was done and said, and put to death all suspects. (493) Frightful anarchy reigned in the palace. Everyone invented slanders to gratify some personal enmity or hatred and many availed themselves of the murderous mood of the king to rid themselves of their enemies. Lies found instant credence and chastisement came more swiftly than the slander: the accuser of a moment ago was himself accused and he and his victims were led off to death; for the king's inquiries were cut short by the danger to his life. (494) He grew so embittered that he had no gentle looks even for those not accused and treated his own friends with utmost harshness. Many of these he debarred from the court and those who were beyond the reach of his arm felt the lash of his tongue. (495) Antipater added his share to Alexander's misfortune. He assembled a group of allies who slandered Alexander in every imaginable way. The king was reduced to such a state of terror by Antipater's lies that he imagined Alexander coming upon him with sword in hand [*a*].

9. Antipater's exploitation of Herod's morbidity

(496) Impulsively, Herod arrested and imprisoned Alexander. He then proceeded to torture his son's friends. Many died without a word, or after saying only what they knew; but some, driven by their agonies, gave false testimony. They declared that Alexander and Aristobulus were plotting against the king and were looking for an opportunity to kill him while he was hunting and that they intended to make a dash for Rome [*a*]. (497) Though this story was improbable and fabricated under compulsion, the king was prepared to accept it, consoling himself that the imprisonment of his son appeared justified [*b*].

Chapter XXV

1. Archelaus' astute mediation

(498) When Alexander realized that he could not change his father's conviction, he resolved to confront the danger. He composed four scrolls directed against his detractors in which he admitted to a conspiracy but implicated most of his accomplices, above all Pheroras and Salome. He declared that the latter had forced herself into his chamber one night and had had intercourse with him against his will. (499) These documents, which included many terrible allegations incriminating persons of the highest rank, fell into Herod's hands. Alarmed for his son-in-law and daughter, Archelaus hastily arrived in Judaea. He came to their aid with remarkable shrewdness and by using guile, he diverted the king's threats into other channels [*a*]. (500) For, as he met him, he exclaimed: "Where is that scoundrel son-in-law of mine? Where will I set eyes on this damned parricide so that I may tear him to pieces with my own hands? And my daughter too shall share the fate of her fine husband for even if she had no part in his schemes, she is contaminated as the wife of such a vile wretch! (501) I am astonished at you too, the intended victim of this plot, because of your forebearance if it is true that Alexander is still alive! I, for my part, hurried here from Cappadocia as I expected the culprit to have long since paid his penalty and I meant to ask your advice regarding my daughter whom I gave away to that wretch out of regard for your exalted rank. But now, I

the preceding chapters, Herod's character had been that of a man of aggressive and cruel temperament since the days of his youth. He had then been capable of killing off the rebels without trial; he had challenged the Sanhedrin's authority as no Jew had ever done; later on, he grew suspicious of most of the people within his realm and outside it, and this, according to some authorities, accounts for the numerous fortresses he erected to protect his realm. Though he betrothed Mariamme for love, nevertheless, love not-withstanding, he proved susceptible to insane suspicions and killed her. His fear of the surviving members of the Hasmonean dynasty led him to the murder of Hyrcanus II and young Aristobulus. Fifteen years later (13/12 BC) the recurrent suspicions resurfaced as a result of court intrigues by Antipater and Salome. Such a record of fixed obsessions was tantamount to a paranoid personality.

497[*b*] A more credible version emerges from the story related in *Antiquities* XVI, 253. A confession was exacted by torture from another young man, according to which Alexander had written to friends in Rome and asked them to arrange for him to be summoned there, since he possessed information about contacts between Herod and the Parthians. The same person also stated that Alexander had prepared a potion of poison for himself at Ascalon.

499[*a*] *Archelaus' astute mediation* The corresponding account in *Antiquities* XVI, 262-265 lays stress on Archelaus' analysis of the imbroglio and the psychological motivations and expeditious arguments which could help him in resolving it, particularly as his persuasiveness changed Herod's anger into the protective attitude of a father anxious to shield his son and prevent disaster.

find that we have both to take counsel about the two of them. If you are too much of a father to give your rebellious son what he deserves, we had better change places and carry out each other's sentences."

2. Alexander absolved

(502) With this swaggering declaration he deluded Herod despite the latter's defiant attitude. Herod gave him for his perusal the scrolls composed by Alexander which they examined together chapter by chapter dwelling upon each. Archelaus now found new opportunities to further his subterfuge: gradually, he shifted the blame on the persons named in the scrolls and more particularly on Pheroras. When he felt that the king trusted him, he remarked: (503) "We must make sure that all these villains have not conspired against this young man and not he against you. I see no reason that could have thrust him into such a crime, when he already enjoyed the honors of royalty and expected to succeed you to the throne, unless he was seduced by others who misguided the easy-going youth. For such persons have been known indeed to impose not only on the young but also on older persons; and most illustrious houses and entire kingdoms have been overturned by them."

3. (504) Herod saw the force of this argument and for some time relaxed his anger against Alexander and transferred it to Pheroras, the chief villain of the four documents. When Pheroras observed this quick change in the king's attitude and the dominating influence exercised over him by his friend Archelaus, he despaired of saving his skin through honorable means and therefore decided to do it by sheer impudence. He abandoned Alexander and threw himself on the mercy of Archelaus [*a*]. (505) But the latter replied that he could hardly see how he could sue for pardon for a man mixed up in such grave charges. It was obvious that he plotted against the king and caused the young prince's misfortunes; however, if he were willing to abandon his tricks and denials to plead guilty to the crime he was charged with and to beg the pardon of his brother who loved him, then he, Archelaus, would help him in every possible way.

4. (506) Pheroras took his advice. Assuming a sorrowful attitude calculated to arouse the deepest compassion, he donned a black garment and threw himself in tears at Herod's feet, begging his pardon as he had so often successfully done on previous occasions. He confessed to being despicable, guilty on every count that was laid to his charge. He deplored his mental aberration and madness which had been brought on by his passionate love for his wife. (507) After bringing Pheroras to the point that he accused and gave evidence against himself, Archelaus now proceeded to plead for him and mitigate Herod's wrath, by quoting parallel cases in his own house. He had himself, so he

504[*a*] *Antiquities* XVI, 269 puts it this way: "When Pheroras had been persuaded to do this, two purposes were accomplished at the same time, for the charges against the youth were dismissed contrary to expectation and Archelaus also reconciled Pheroras with the king."

510[*a*] *Antiquities* XVII, 267–270 provides a better insight into Archelaus' diplomacy. He realized that Herod's apparent reconciliation with his son would not last long due to Antipater's intrigues. This is the reason according to A. Schalit that Archelaus planned to air the whole problem before Augustus and thus tie Herod's hands. It would prevent him doing anything to displease the emperor as well as being unable to undo the reconciliation he had brought about. He agreed to proceed with Herod to Rome, as he had already written to the emperor, though the account in *War* I, 510 states that he advised sending Alexander to Rome. It would appear, however, that the version in *Antiquities* is more accurate: Archelaus could hardly advise sending Alexander to Rome and risk the obvious result of arousing Herod's (and Antipater's) suspicions that Alexander would expose the whole ugly tale to the emperor and upset Herod's internal security. In fact Herod himself proceeded to Rome for the third time.

512[*a*] Herod was grateful to Archelaus for having extricated him from this very dangerous crisis and for having served as an intermediary between himself and his son. Moreover, the "high officials at court" referred to included the Roman legate in Syria with whom Herod had been on bad terms.

513[*b*] Lacedaemonia is Sparta in southern Greece. Eurycles was the son of a Spartan pirate who had been beheaded by Antony. He distinguished himself at the naval battle of Actium at the side of Augustus and fought to avenge his father's memory. Octavius (later Augustus) rewarded him by granting him Roman citizenship and returning to him his rights in Sparta. However, Eurycles' subsequent involvement in intrigues drove him out of Sparta.

516[*a*] He was to all intents and purposes Antipater's spy. The corresponding tale is related in *Antiq.* XVI, 300–307.

A Greek middleman

stated, suffered much worse treatment at his brother's hands, but had put the obligations toward family-ties above revenge. For kingdoms are like corpulent individuals where some member always becomes irritated from the sheer weight it carried; yet surely the surgeon's knife would be out of the question and some milder method of cure is called for.

5. The general reconciliation

(508) Archelaus succeded by these arguments in pacifying Herod's anger against Pheroras but he himself affected still to be furious with Alexander by insisting that he would see his daughter divorced and would take her home. Thus he managed to bring Herod to the point of pleading with him on the young man's behalf and of once more requesting the hand of Archelaus' daughter for his son. Archelaus answered him with an air of complete sincerity that he had his permission to marrry her off to anyone he pleased—except Alexander; for his dearest wish was to maintain the marriage links between Herod and himself. (509) To this the king replied that Archelaus would really be returning his son to him by refraining from breaking up the marriage since they had children already and that the young man was most devoted to his wife. If she remained with him her very proximity would help him to be ashamed of his misdeeds; whereas he would be driven to utter despair if she were torn from him; for domestic affections exercise a calming effect on reckless spirits. (510) Archelaus consented grudgingly. He was reconciled to the youthful offender and healed the breach between him and his father. However, he added that it was absolutely necessary to send him to Rome for an audience with Caesar to whom he had already dispatched a full report on the matter [*a*].

6. (511) Thus the stratagem by which Archelaus rescued his son-in-law was a complete success. The reconciliation was followed by festivities and mutual entertainment. Upon his departure Herod gave him a gift of seventy talents, a throne of gold set with precious stones, some eunuchs and a concubine called Pannychis. (512) He rewarded his friends with other favors according to their rank. By royal order, magnificent presents were offered to Archelaus by all the high officers at court. Then Herod and his nobles escorted them up to Antioch [*a*].

Chapter XXVI

1. Eurycles' intrigue

(513) Sometime afterwards there arrived in Judaea a man who could do far more than the stratagem of Archelaus and who not only brought to an end the reconciliation that the latter had contrived for Alexander but also brought about the prince's ruin. He was a Lacedaemonian named Eurycles [*b*], whose intrusion into Judaea arose from a passion for money; for Greece could no longer satisfy his rich tastes. (514) He presented Herod with magnificent presents as a bait for his quarry and was rewarded instantly by a far more generous gesture; but he had no use for an outright gift unless he could make a profit out of the realm by bloodshed. (515) He won ready access to the king with empty flattery, subtle conversation and lying boasts of his own worth. He summed up Herod's character quickly and all he said or did was calculated to please him. Thus he became one of his closest friends. Indeed the king and the whole court were specially delighted to honor this Spartan for his country's sake.

2. (516) When he had learned everything about the corruption that was undermining the royal house, the strife between the brothers and their father's attitude to each, Eurycles feigned friendship towards Alexander, although, in reality, he was indebted to Antipater for his hospitality, claiming falsely that he had long been an intimate friend of Archelaus [*a*]. Thus he was received quickly as a proven friend and introduced immediately by Alexander to his brother Aristobulus. (517) Playing first one part and then another, in various ways he won the confidence of everybody, but first of all he became a servant to Antipater and a traitor to Alexander. He represented to the former how disgraceful it was that he, the eldest son, should disregard the intrigues of persons who coveted his prospects and to Alexander, that he, the son of one princess and husband of another, should allow the son of a commoner to succeed to the throne, especially when he had the powerful backing of Archelaus! (518) The fiction of his friendship with Archelaus convinced the young prince that he was a counselor to be trusted; so, keeping nothing back, Alexander poured out to him his grievances against Antipater. He added that it would not surprise him if Herod, after murdering their mother would deprive him and his brother of her kingdom. Eurycles pretended to sympathize and grieve with him. (519) After tricking Aristobulus into saying the same things, thus involving both brothers in criticism of their father, he went off to repeat their confidences to Antipater. He used the lie that their brothers were plotting against him and were watching only for an opportunity to swoop upon him sword in hand. (520) He was rewarded richly for his information and proceeded to sing the praise of Antipater to his father. Finally, for a price, he agreed to destroy Aristobulus and Alexander and he came to accuse them before their father. (521) Presenting himself to Herod he declared that he was offering him life in return for his kindness and the light of day in repayment for his hospitality. "For," he said, "a sword has long since been sharpened to destroy you and Alexander has braced his right arm to wield it; but it is I who have delayed the blow by pretending to assist

him." Alexander, he continued, said that Herod, not content with reigning over an empire that was not his own—having murdered our mother and squandered her realm—was now proceeding to impose a bastard as his successor and offer their grandfather's kingdom [*b*] to that damnable Antipater. But he, Alexander (as reported by Eurycles) would avenge the spirits of Hyrcanus and Mariamne; for he would never stoop to inherit the throne of such a father without bloodshed. (522) Then came the constant daily provocations to which he was subjected, for he could not utter the most casual remark without it being turned against him. Whenever allusion was made to other people's ancestry his father would gratuitously insult him by remarking: "No one is noble but Alexander who scorns his father for his low birth!" He gave offense to his father at the hunt if he remained silent and if he commended him he read irony in his words. (523) In fact, he found his father impossible to please on all occasions, reserving all his affections for Antipater. Therefore he would perish willingly if he failed in his attempt. If, on the other hand, he succeeded in killing his father he had protectors to fall back upon; first Archelaus his father-in-law to whom he could easily escape; and then he would go to Ceasar who, to that day, was not aware of Herod's true character. (524) For he would not as on a former occasion stand before the emperor intimidated by his father's presence. He would not confine his statements merely to the discussion of his personal grievances. No, first he would proclaim to the world the miseries of his people, bled to death by taxation [*c*], and then reveal the luxury and excesses on which Herod lavished the money extracted through the blood of the populace; of the character of the persons who had waxed rich at his brother's expense and the means by which certain cities had been accorded favors. (525) He would also demand an inquiry into the fate of his own grandfather [*d*] and his mother and expose all the corruption pervading Herod's kingdom; he could not be judged a patricide under these circumstances.

3. (526) Having delivered his speech against Alexander, Eurycles proceeded to extol Antipater to the skies as the only son who loved his father and for that reason an obstacle to the plot. The king who had barely recovered from his previous shock exploded into uncontrollable fury. (527) Antipater seized this opportunity to send in other people to accuse his brothers of holding clandestine meetings with Jucundus and Tyrannus, formerly commanders of the king's cavalry, but now degraded owing to some misdemeanors [*a*]. This information raised Herod's indignation to a climax and he had the two men tortured. (528) They did not confess to any of the crimes ascribed to them; but a letter was produced, addressed by Alexander to the governor of the fortress of Alexandrion, requesting that he admit him and his brother,

521[*b*] *Herod's persecution complex* The "grandfather's kingdom" refers to his ancestor Hyrcanus (525[*d*]). This version (in *War*) apparently follows the annals of Nicolaus of Damascus who seemed to believe that there was some foundation to the princes' intentions of patricide. There was a malevolent atmosphere at court and it is true that the princes meant ultimately to escape abroad. It was their garrulousness and ingenuousness that were partly to blame for their eventual fate, as their complaints and worries could easily be interpreted as treacherous by whomever wished to construe them as such. All this paved the way to Eurycles' nefarious scheme. It appears more likely that Herod had not in fact recovered from previous shocks and any irritation could throw him into paroxysms of his persecution complex and even turn it into a mortal hatred of his sons.

524[*c*] *Alexander's complaint against high taxation* The prince's charges that his people were bled to death by taxation may be illustrated by the elaborate system of taxation that had developed in Judaea. It was based partly on the pattern of the former Hellenistic kings; later of the Hasmonean kings and finally expanded by the more thorough system carried out by Herod's extensive bureaucracy. This was known for its thoroughness, punctiliousness, extensive paper-work and sluggishness in producing licences, permits and the like. With the help of his efficient civil service Herod conducted censuses every six years in order to assess more accurately the taxes falling due (this is paralleled by Quirinius' later census of AD 6–Luke 2, 2). The taxes—direct and indirect—were varied and included: a poll tax of fixed value, a universal tribute, a soil tax based presumably on approximately 1% of the crop assessment, a salt tax, sales and workshop taxes (based on a percentage of production), house taxes, customs dues, road and harbor dues. The fact that Herod twice (in 20 and 14 BC) remitted part of the taxes and that in 25 BC during a famine he undertook the provisioning of the country, is capable of many interpretations but not that the bureaucracy bled the people out of sheer wickedness. It is believed by many scholars that the yearly taxes paid to Herod were more than a thousand Jewish talents (the talent was worth three thousand shekels or ten thousand Attic drachmae. Those were the days when poor people lived on a few drachmae and when the half-shekel paid as a universal tribute to the Temple treasury was a respectable contribution (cf. 646[*e*]: Herod's tremendous wealth). Though the Jews had no reason for discontent from the economic standpoint, a delegation presented itself before Augustus after the death of Herod and insisted on a remittance of the high taxes *War* II, 80–100).

525[*d*] Hyrcanus II was Alexander's great-grandfather on his mother's side: he was the father of Alexandra, mother of Mariamme.

527[*a*] This information did not reach the king through Antipater but through Herod's own ring of spies. He was at the time intent on seeking evidence to support his suspicions and incriminate his real or supposed enemies.

528[*b*] It is doubtful that Alexander would have expressed this so explicitly.

532[*a*] The proof of Herod's insane prejudice was his rejection of the evidence brought by Euarestus who visited Judaea at the same time as Eurycles. It is likely that the episode about the cavalry commanders and their friendly contacts with the prince antecedes the tale about Euarestus' evidence (it is known that the princes were favorites in Jewish military circles). The former tale proved to be the clinching argument Herod sought in his equivocal and insane approach to his family. As we learn from *Antiq.* XVI, 313–324, following the arrest and torture of Jucundus and Tyrannus, the commander of the fortress of Alexandrion was arrested on a charge of having promised the two brothers refuge in his stronghold. He pleaded his innocence but his own son attested to his guilt and produced a letter to this effect written by Alexander. The king's inquest tried to establish that there was more to it than an attempt by the princes to escape and he was prepared to interpret this evidence as preliminary to an elaborate plot of treason. The officers involved in the alleged conspiracy were stoned to death by a mob at Jericho and the two princes themselves saved from its fury only by the intervention of Ptolemy and Pheroras, the highest officers in Herod's court. All that the princes admitted finally was their desire to escape from the poisoned atmosphere of the court and flee to Archelaus—which for Herod proved a decisive factor against them.

534[*a*] This was sent in writing by messenger.

Aristobulus into the fortress after they had slain their father and to hand over the arms and weapons of the place [*b*]. (529) Alexander declared this letter to be the handiwork of Diophantus, a secretary of the king, an unscrupulous fellow who was adept at imitating other people's handwriting. He had committed numerous forgeries and was put to death finally for a crime of that nature. Herod had the governor of the fortress tortured also but he failed to elicit even from him anything about these allegations.

4. (530) Despite the weakness of the evidence obtained, Herod ordered his sons to be kept under surveillance although still at liberty. Eurycles, the trouble-maker of his house and the instigator of this abominable affair, he termed his savior and benefactor and rewarded him with fifty talents. (531) The villain made off quickly to Cappadocia before the truth transpired and there he extorted more funds from Archelaus on the brazen pretext that he had reconciled Herod to Alexander. He then returned to Greece where he squandered the proceeds of his crime in promoting further mischief. He was arraigned twice before Caesar for spreading sedition in Achaia and fleecing the cities of the province. He was condemned to exile by Caesar. Thus he paid the penalty for the betrayal of Alexander and Aristobulus.

5. Alleged military conspiracy of Alexander's friends

(532) In contrast to the conduct of this Spartan, it is fit to mention that of Euarestus of Cos [*a*] who had been one of Alexander's closest friends. He visited Judaea at the same time as Eurycles and when the king put to him the allegations made by his other guest, he affirmed on oath that he had not heard anything of the kind from the young men. (533) Nevertheless his testimony was of no avail to the unfortunate pair for Herod had ears only to slander and he welcomed only men who shared his credulity and animosity.

Chapter XXVII

1. Herod, Syllaeus the Arab, and the emperor

(534) Salome provided a further stimulus to Herod's cruelty to his sons. For Aristobulus wished to implicate her—she was both his mother-in-law and aunt—in his own dangers. He sent her a warning [*a*] to look to her own safety because the king planned to kill her on the charge previously brought against her; that in her desire to wed the Arab Syllaeus, she had privately passed on to him the secrets of the king, his enemy [*b*]. (535) This was the final storm that sent the ill-starred brothers to their doom, for Salome hastened to the king and reported the warning she had received. The king could not contain himself any longer and he put both his sons in irons and in solitary confinement; he dispatched hastily Volumnius [*c*], his military tribune, and his friend Olympus to place before Caesar all the evidence in writing. (536) They sailed for Rome [*d*] and delivered the king's dispatches to the emperor who was deeply distressed for the young men but did not think it right to deprive the father of his authority over his sons [*e*]. (537) His reply to Herod was to leave the matter to his discretion; but he added a recommendation that Herod hold an inquiry into the plot before a joint committee of his own relatives and the provincial governors [*f*]. Then, if his sons were convicted, he should put them to death; but if they had intended merely to flee, they should be dealt a lesser penalty.

2. (538) Accepting this suggestion, Herod sailed to Berytus [*a*], the place suggested by Ceasar, and

534[*b*] The previous charge is related in 487. Nevertheless the situation around Syllaeus involved other and more significant events which bore on the relationship between Herod and the emperor (though not mentioned in Josephus' account in *War* I but referred to in *Antiquities* XVI, 271–299). About 12 BC, after Herod had returned for the third time from Rome, a fresh incident occurred that served to sharpen Augustus' annoyance and served as an initial pointer to a change of attitude towards Herod. Syllaeus, the vizier of the Nabatean king, Obadas, who was increasingly hostile to Herod, not only aided a rebellion against Herod in Trachonitis, north of Transjordan, but refused to settle an old debt which had been contracted in Cleopatra's time. Herod demanded that he hand over the Trachonitis rebels and pay the debt. The dispute dragged on until Herod invaded Nabatea. This bold military move angered Augustus as Herod had exceeded his authority and he intimated to Herod that their friendship was over.

535[*c*] *Nicolaus' pacifying mission* When Herod realized how low his prestige had fallen in Rome, he decided (9/8 BC) to improve his position by sending another delegation to Rome, this time headed by Nicolaus of Damascus, who was a mutual friend of the emperor and himself (*Antiq.* XVI, 293–299). Meanwhile a new complication arose through Eurycles' intrigue (related in 513–532), and Herod decided to convict his sons for treason "against the state." He made sure that the emperor should receive his written statements to this effect and instructed his messengers Volumnius and Olympus not to hand these statements in until Nicolaus had a chance to pacify the emperor over the matter of Syllaeus. Herod learned eventually that the emperor had been mollified by Nicolaus' intervention; that he had ordered Syllaeus to pay the debt and ratified the independence of the Nabateans within the realm.

536[*d*] *The emperor's opinion of Herod* When Augustus read Herod's statement, he realized that the king had aged and was taken up with domestic troubles and intrigues at court. He agreed, accordingly, to receive graciously the generous gifts that the messengers of the Nabatean Aretas IV (Obadas' successor) had sent him. Augustus recognized Aretas as king over the Nabateans. The emperor's old sympathy for Herod never revived. It could not, for by now family feuds had resulted in such tragedy as to draw from the emperor the bitter jest that he would sooner be Herod's pig than Herod's son. The jest which gains when uttered in Greek, had its sting, for Herod would never touch pig's flesh!

536[*e*] Ironically enough, Augustus recognized Herod's right to try his sons for treason provided he followed imperial instructions (538). As it turned out it was the imperial reply to Herod that decided the fate of the sons of Mariamne, as became evident from the proceedings during the trial.

537[*f*] Caesar advised Herod not to sentence his sons on his own opinion alone. The "provincial governors" were the emperor's formal representatives in Syria. The court was made up after the pattern of a *synedrion* consisting of about 150 members and endowed with full authority.

538[*a*] Beirut, the modern capital of Lebanon. It had been a Roman colony since 14 BC. It was famous for its law faculty and therefore chosen for the famous trial.

538[*b*] Sentius Saturnius, governor of Syria.

538[*c*] It is uncertain whether this was the tribune Volumnius, Herod's friend whom he had sent to Rome.

538[*d*] Herod chose to ignore the emperor's recommendation about Archelaus' participation, knowing that he would upset the whole scheme.

539[*e*] Namely, *Ras Damur*, a small town halfway between Beirut and Sidon.

540[*a*] Herod's oration was throughout a bloodthirsty outburst, underlined by a streak of madness. At the trial he left no room for inquiry into the merits of the case, but set out to demand that his sons be convicted outright. Josephus recounts elsewhere that as he read the sons' letter, in which they related their intention of escaping from their father—and found in it offensive allusions to himself—he screamed that this was definite proof of their treacherous plot, and that he preferred to die than to live with such shame. He ended by insisting that he possessed the right to exact supreme punishment not only by virtue of his paternal authority, and in view of the permission he received from the emperor, but also in accordance with the ancient customs empowering a father to condemn his rebellious son (Deut. 21, 18–22). The sons, of course, were not allowed to speak in their own defense.

543[*b*] Herod still hesitated to carry out the execution, as Nicolaus had then just returned from Rome and told him of the dubious impression the trial had created in high Roman circles. He advised Herod to act cautiously, that is, to keep the princes in prison and delay the execution (*Antiq.* XVI, 370–372).

550[*a*] *The public execution* A public assembly was held in Caesarea. The condemned were "handed over" to the Jewish community that carried out the sentence in the traditional manner of stoning the culprits; this brings to mind the stoning of Naboth the Jezreelite a few centuries earlier (I Kings 21, 9–14). It appears that Herod wished to abide by ancient tradition and to prove that he either observed, or had revived traditional laws.

551[*b*] *Sebaste* Samaria.

551[*c*] *The hopeless impasse* In analyzing this tragic outcome, Josephus, in *Antiquities* XVI, 394-404, poses the question as to whether the fate of the princes was dictated by the insensate cruelty of Herod; by the hand of "Fortune that has a power greater than all prudent reflection," or by Fate; or through the innate weaknesses of the princes themselves. The latter does not in itself exculpate their father. Indeed, "after deliberating a long time, and after frequent starts and as frequent hesitations, and, finally, to take a stand and accomplish the deed—this is the act of a murderous mind that cannot be turned from evil" (*Antiq.* XVI, 403). In truth, it seemed fated that Herod would behave as he did, since his deeds reflected the relentless struggle of his new dynasty with the latent ambitions of the surviving Hasmoneans represented by the noble queen Mariamne and her two cleancut but innocent-minded sons, who were doomed in that inimical and crafty bed of intrigue that was Herod's court.

552[*a*] Peace and calm did not return to Herod's court after the crisis. Antipater's influence was paramount and his father's backing assured. However, unlike Alexander, Antipater seems to have lacked any great following in Herod's army. His participation in the elimination of Mariamne's sons had earned him the hatred of many.

553[*b*] Antipater pursued his course and endeavored to gain a firmer hold on Judaea and strengthen his position in Rome, doing his utmost to enlist the support of Herod's friends there. He was aided in Judaea by his uncle Theudion (*Antiq.* XVII, 70) the brother of his mother, who had married Aristobulus' widow, Berenice (*Antiq.* XVII, 9), in order to gain support from both Salome and her. In addition, a reconciliation between Antipater and pro-Hasmonean circles was made possible through Antipater's marriage to the daughter of Antigonus, last king of the former dynasty; the children she bore him were no less Hasmonean than the children and grandchildren of Herod and Mariamme (*Antiq.* XVII, 92).

554[*c*] In Judaea, Antipater's friendship with his uncle Pheroras formed the cornerstone of all his actions. This was to Herod's liking, since his own relations with Pheroras were then at their lowest ebb. This was due to the pro-Pharisaic leanings of his wife (571[*a*]).

556[*a*] The term defines the high officials and aristocrats close to the king (422–425).

557[*b*] Mariamme.

convened the court. According to Caesar's written instructions, the bench was occupied by Roman officers, namely Saturninus [*b*] and his legates, Pedanius and others, together with Volumnius, the procurator [*c*]. Next came the king's relatives and friends, including Salome and Pheroras, followed by all the nobility of Syria, except King Archelaus [*d*] who, as Alexander's father-in-law, was distrusted by Herod. (539) Herod's sons were not brought forward in court, a shrewd tactical ploy, for he knew that their mere appearance would surely arouse compassion; and if, in addition, they were allowed to speak, Alexander would have no difficulty in refuting the charges. They were consequently held in custody at Platana [*e*], a village near Sidon.

3. Herod's prosecution

(540) The king rose [*a*] and cursed his sons as if they were present. His attempt to prove the charge of conspiracy was weak for lack of evidence; but he laid considerable stress on the insults, mockeries and innumerable offenses of which he had been the victim; these, he declared to the court, were harder to bear than death itself. When he saw that no one contradicted him, he pitied his cruel fate, even in winning his case against his sons; his triumph would indeed be bitter and he himself would be the sufferer. (541) Then he asked the judges to express their several opinions. Saturninus was first to deliver his opinion, namely to condemn the young men but not to death; as the father of three of his children present in court, he said it would not be right for him to vote for the execution of another man's children. His two legates voted likewise and several others followed their lead. (542) Volumnius was the first to pronounce the death sentence; then all who spoke after him condemned the youths to death, some from flattery, others from hatred of Herod, but none of them from conviction that the accused were guilty. (543) All Syria and Judaea were in suspense anxiously awaiting the last scene of the drama; yet none imagined that Herod would be so inhuman as to murder his children. Meanwhile, the king dragged his sons to Tyre and thence took ship to Caesarea, weighing the various possibilities of executing them [*b*].

4. (544) One of the soldiers in the king's army, named Tiro, whose son was an intimate friend of Alexander and who was very fond of the young princes, was so overcome by indignation that his reason gave way. At first he went about proclaiming that justice had been trampled underfoot, truth was dead, nature damned, the world a den of injustice and whatever else passion prompted in a man who gave no thought for his own life. Finally he presented himself boldly before the king and said: (545) "You are the most god-forsaken of men; this is what I think of you; for you trust the word of the basest of scoundrels to the injury of your own flesh and blood—if it is really true that Pheroras and

Salome whom you have often sentenced to death have now gained your confidence to the detriment of your children! Do you not see that they are cutting off your legitimate heirs, leaving none but Antipater whom they have chosen to be king because they can twist him around their little fingers? (546) But take heed that the death of the brothers should not some day cause you to hate the army; for there is not a man there who does not pity the youth and many of the officers are cursing you openly." He went on to name these opponents whereupon they were promptly arrested by the king, along with Tiro and his son.

5. The execution

(547) Directly after this, one of the court barbers, named Trypho, in the grip of some frenzy came forward and informed upon himself: "This Tiro tried to induce me also to cut your throat with my razor when attending upon you and he promised me a large reward from Alexander." (548) Hearing this, Herod interrogated Tiro, his son and the barber under torture, and when father and son denied everything and the other had nothing to add, he ordered Tiro to be tormented even more severely. (549) At last the son, moved by compassion, promised to divulge everything to the king if he would spare the life of his father. When Herod granted his request, he related that his father, at the instigation of Alexander, intended to plan his death. According to some, this statement was a fabrication intended to end his father's torture; others, on the other hand, maintained that it was true.

6. (550) Herod formally accused the officers concerned and Tiro in public assembly, and enlisted the aid of the populace to dispatch them [*a*]. They and the barber were beaten to death on the spot with clubs and stones. (551) Then he dispatched his sons to Sebaste [*b*], a town close to Caesarea, and ordered them to be strangled. As this order was executed promptly, he directed the bodies to be conveyed to the fortress of Alexandrion to be buried there with Alexander, their maternal grandfather. Such was the end of Alexander and Aristobulus [*c*].

Chapter XXVIII

1. Hatred focused on Antipater

(552) Antipater had now an indisputable claim to the succession; but he became an object of utter loathing for the nation [*a*]. Everyone knew that it was he who concocted all the accusations against his brothers. Moreover, he was haunted with considerable alarm at the sight of the children of his victims growing to maturity. For Glaphyra had borne Alexander two sons, Tigranes and Alexander; and Aristobulus had three sons by his marriage with Berenice, daughter of Salome: Herod, Agrippa and Aristobulus, besides two daughters, Herodias and Mariamme. (553) After Alexander's execution Herod had sent back Glaphyra to Cappadocia with her dowry; and he married Berenice, the widow of Aristobulus, to Antipater's maternal uncle, the match having been arranged with Antipater to conciliate his enemy, Salome [*b*]. (554) Antipater sought also to ingratiate himself with Pheroras [*c*] through presents and other courtesies and with Caesar's friends by sending considerable sums to Rome. Saturninus and all his staff in Syria were satiated with his lavish generosity. Yet the more he gave the more he met with hatred, as it was felt that he did not distribute gifts out of generosity but they were extorted from him by fear. (555) Consequently, the recipients were no more better disposed towards him than before, while those whom he had overlooked became implacable enemies. Nevertheless, Antipater's presents became daily more magnificent when he noted that the king, contrary to expectations, bestowed special care upon the orphans and showed his remorse for the murder of his sons by his tenderness towards their children.

2. (556) One day Herod assembled his relatives and friends [*a*], set the children before them and said, his eyes full of tears: "An evil genius has deprived me of the fathers of these children, but nature and compassion for the orphans commends them to my care. If I have been a most unfortunate father, I still attempt at any rate to prove myself a more devoted grandfather and to leave their tutelage, after my death, to the persons most dear to me. (557) I give in marriage your daughter Pheroras to the elder of these brothers, Alexander's sons, so that this alliance will make you his natural guardian. To your son Antipater, I give the daughter of Aristobulus [*b*], so that you may be the father of this orphan. My own Herod shall take her sister [*c*], for on his mother's side he is the grandson of a high priest. (558) Such is my decision, and let no friend of mine oppose it. And I pray God to bless these unions for the good of my realm and of my descendants and to look with gentler eyes upon these children than those with which He ever looked on their fathers."

3. (559) After these words, he gave way to tears, joined the children's hands, fondly embraced one after the other and dismissed the gathering. His decision struck a chill into Antipater whose chagrin was apparent to all. He feared that the honor bestowed upon the orphans spelled his own undoing and that his

557[*c*] Herodias, mentioned in the New Testament. After her first marriage to her uncle, as above, she deserted him for another uncle, Herod Antipas, who divorced his wife in order to marry her. She drew reproof from John the Baptist. After Salome, her daughter (married to Philip, Herod's son and tetrarch of Trachonitis) danced before Herod Antipas, she gained his promise to grant her whatever she asked, namely, the severed head of John the Baptist (*Antiq.* XVIII, 136–137; Matt. 14, 1–12; Mark. 6, 17–29; also compare detailed story in notes to *War* II, 18, 2–3). Josephus states that Herodias eventually went into exile with Herod Antipas.

559[*a*] Antipater feared that some day King Archelaus of Cappadocia and Pheroras, the tetrarch of Peraea in Transjordan, would back up the orphans, since the former was their grandfather, and the latter was likely to give his daughter in marriage to one of them.

562[*a*] The nine wives did not include Mariamme, already dead.

562[*b*] Herod had married the beautiful second Mariamme, daughter of Simon ben Boethus, whom he elevated to the rank of high priest. The nominations to the high priesthood had become the prerogative of Herod the Great, and this nomination was in recognition of Simeon's daughter's charm and beauty. This new process of nomination by the king, which Herod had instituted since the episode of Hananael and Jonathan Aristobulus (see 437), deprived the high priesthood of its value, contrary to previous tradition which regarded the office as a life appointment (see 571).

562[*c*] The nephew, Joseph, was the son of Herod's brother who was killed at the battle of Jericho (see 323).

563[*d*] Herod's family life was very complex because of his harem of nine wives. It was replete with melodrama and endemic intrigue. Yet besides this emotional preoccupation the prevailing oriental patriarchal pattern allowed women no personal rights except those recognized by Jewish law over their children and their dowries. Under Herod's despotic regime, they were treated like chattel to be married off to whomsoever their lord and master found convenient for "reasons of state" and other motives. In accordance with the traditional law, they could just as easily be divorced at their husbands' (or at their parents') will when they no longer pleased their spouse, or proved to be barren. Meanwhile, the court was steeped in mutual hatred and suspicion and showed all the signs typical of an Oriental palace and harem in which the rule of its aging monarch is drawing to a close.

565[*a*] Herod's acquiescence was motivated by the suspicion that Antipater would harm the royal orphans.

566[*a*] On the other hand, *Antiq.* XVII, 10, written later, relates that this empress took Herod's side and sought to break off Salome's proposed match (see 487 and 534).

566[*b*] Berenice (see 553[*b*]).

566[*c*] Theudion (see 553[*b*]).

566[*d*] Cypros.

566[*e*] Salampsio (Shlomzion in Hebrew).

568[*a*] Salome and Roxana.

570[*b*] Salome was even craftier than Antipater, and the proof is that she could defend Pheroras' wife against the cabal raised against her by no less a person than Herod (see 571[*a*], Pheroras' wife and the Pharisees).

571[*a*] *The Pharisees and Herod* Josephus barely refers in the present book to the opposition of the Pharisees, but in truth, this played a more important part in the latter years of Herod's reign. Talmudic sources that refer back to these days stress that the Pharisees disqualified him because of his ethnic descent (*Baba Bathra* 3[*b*]). It is also evident from the fact that his descendant Agrippa (*War* II) wept when he feared that the Pharisees did not recognize his sovereignty for a similar reason (*Sotah* VII, 8). In addition they opposed Herod because he suppressed the Sanhedrin and introduced new laws that were contrary to the Halakha (the accepted tradition of interpretation of the written law, the Torah), and that appertained fundamentally to the sphere of the latter's authority in the matter of traditional legal statutes. Herod had also deprived the high priesthood of its value (562[*b*]; Talmud, *Yoma* 9[*a*], 18[*a*]). This fact must be added to Herod's clash with the semi-democratic order—whose social privileges were matched by contemporary Hellenistic mores—and which the Pharisees sought at all times to protect. Furthermore, they and the "silent masses", as well as the richer classes and old rural aristocracy, objected to Herod's overall Hellenization of public life and penchant for Greek civilization through the establishment of stadiums, hippodromes, theaters and the like, as well as the strengthening of the Hellenistic-gentile settlements (as related in previous chapters)—a trend that led to disastrous results for the Jewish population in the subsequent period, as we shall see. They objected to his arbitrariness and arrogance in establishing his own laws; for laws and justice can only be dispensed by God, according to Pharisaic doctrine and not by the will of kings, according to Hellenistic tradition. Most Jews did not regard Herod as a "Jewish king" of established Jewish de-

claims to the throne would be jeopardized again if Alexander's children were to have in addition to Archelaus, the support of Pheroras, a tetrarch [*a*]. (560) He pondered over the hatred which the people bore him and their compassion for the orphans and the affection that all the Jews had felt for his brothers when they lived and the fond memory in which they were held now after their death, which had been effected by him. Therefore he resolved, at all costs, to break up these betrothals.

4. Herod's family

(561) Antipater was afraid to try any tricks on his harsh father who was very suspicious. He ventured boldly into his presence and implored him outright not to deprive him of the honor which he had conferred on him, nor to leave him the mere title of king while others would enjoy the power; for he would never master the affairs of state should Alexander's son, with Archelaus as his grandfather, also have Pheroras as his father-in-law. (562) Therefore he begged him, as the palace numbered a numerous family, to modify the matrimonial plans. In fact, the king had nine wives and seven had given birth to children [*a*]. Antipater himself was the son of Doris; Herod [Philip] was born of Mariamme, the high priest's daughter [*b*]; Antipater and Archelaus were the sons of Malthace, the Samaritan; Olympias, a daughter by his last wife had married Joseph, the king's nephew [*c*]. Cleopatra, a native of Jerusalem was the mother of Herod and Philip and by Pallas he had Phasael. (563) He had also other daughters, Roxana and Salome, one born by Phaedra, the other by Elpis. Two of his wives were childless, one his cousin and the other his niece. Apart from these, the first Mariamme had borne him two daughters, sisters to Alexander and Aristobulus [*d*]. Considering the composition of this large family, Antipater suggested that he reconsider the projected marriages.

5. (564) The king was highly indignant at Antipater's attitude to the orphans and the idea occurred to him that his murdered sons might also have been the victims of this man's slanders. (565) Therefore, for the moment he retaliated in a long and angry speech, dismissing Antipater from his presence. Later, however, he succumbed to his flattery and made other arrangements. He gave the daughter of Aristobulus to Antipater himself and the daughter of Pheroras to his son [*a*].

6. (566) How effective had been Antipater's adulation in this instance can be seen from Salome's failure in similar circumstances. For although she was Herod's sister and had secured the intercession of Livia, Caesar's wife, in her repeated requests to marry the Arab, Syllaeus [*a*], Herod swore that he would regard her as his worst enemy if she did not renounce her plan. Finally, he married her, against her will, to one

of his friends named Alexas and one of her daughters to the son of Alexas, the other [*b*] to Antipater's maternal uncle [*c*]. Of his daughters by Mariamme, one wedded Antipater [*d*], his sister's son, the other Phasael [*e*], his brother's son.

Chapter XXIX

1. A cabal of women at court

(567) Antipater, having cut off the orphans' hopes and arranged the marriages to suit his purposes, believed that his prospects were safeguarded; with this confidence, now added to his villainy, he became insufferable. As he was unable to avert the detestation he aroused in everybody, he sought security by means of intimidation. He was assisted in this by Pheroras who considered Antipater's claim to the throne as already assured. (568) Moreover, a band of women at court caused fresh troubles. Pheroras' wife, in league with her mother and sister, as well as the mother of Antipater, displayed great insolence in the palace. Pheroras' wife even ventured to affront two daughters of the king [*a*]. She became, consequently, the butt of Herod's particular aversion: yet, despite Herod's hatred of the women, they lorded it over the rest. (569) The only one who stood up to this coterie was Salome, who reported them to the king as a dangerous league which would harm the interests of the realm. When the women realized that they had been denounced and had aroused the king's wrath, they refrained from meeting openly or showing signs of friendship; on the contrary, they pretended to quarrel with each other in the king's hearing. Antipater joined in this false front by quarreling in public with Pheroras. (570) But they kept up their clandestine meetings and nocturnal carousals, while the knowledge that they were watched only brought them closer together. Salome, however, was aware of all of their proceedings and kept Herod informed of everything [*b*].

2. Pheroras' courageous wife

(571) The king was furious particularly at the wife of Pheroras who was the main object of Salome's charges. Accordingly, he assembled a council of his friends and relatives and accused the women of numerous misdeeds, among others of affronting his own daughters; of subsidizing the Pharisees against his interests [*a*], and of alienating his own brother, after bewitching him with drugs. (572) Finally, he ad-

Emperor Augustus, right, his wife Livia, and perhaps Agrippa and Marcellus. Reliefs of the Augustan period

scent, namely that of the "House of David," as the Pharisees would have it, but as "a *king of the Jews*," appointed by Rome, and a loyal protector of the gentiles in his realm. He probably had some deep-felt ties with the majority of the people over whom he ruled. Certainly, he was a despot of the familiar Hellenistic and Roman stamp, who brought administrative and economic acumen to enrich the country and its population as a whole. And again, though it was the Pharisees who had favored surrender to the young Herod and his Roman allies during the siege of Jerusalem, circa 63 BC (see 120–154), because of their realistic understanding of the military and political situation; and though it is argued that during Herod's reign the Pharisees did not oppose him openly (as their forebears did in the days of Alexander Jannaeus, see 88), it must be noted that the nation's strength had become enfeebled after the many and bloody conflicts with his despotism. It required mighty forces in order to overcome this powerful and really brilliant despot, who had the unqualified assurance of Roman help against the Jews, when necessary, added to the imposition of a regime of terror in Judaea, coupled with an era of prosperity. On the other hand, no one could minimize his great pious (and national) accomplishment in rebuilding the Temple—his greatest achievement insofar as his Jewish subjects were concerned. This was a bold attempt to recapture the sympathy of his people—in the face of Pharisee opposition—and to justify his kingship before God.

The Oath of Allegiance to Rome However we learn from Josephus later (*Antiq.* XVI, 29) that the Pharisees who were opposed to Herod, openly and secretly, were prepared to fight against him with violence. It appears that they had already refused to take the oath of allegiance to their king in 17 BC. This was definite political opposition—for unlike the Essenes (*War* II, 120–161; 138) they had no opposition to oaths in principle—and owing to their large numbers, Herod had to leave them unpunished. Some ten years later the name of the emperor was given first place in the oath as a token of Herod's absolute fealty to Augustus.

Pheroras's wife and the Pharisees By 7/6 BC the army was restive, as illustrated by the outspoken bitterness of the soldiers in paragraphs 544–546 and various members of Herod's family, looking for supporters for their designs, offered a chance of expression to hidden discontent and even created it where it had not been before. More serious was a revolt among the Pharisees. Now on the introduction of the new oath which included the emperor's name, Pharisees, numbering about six thousand again refused to take it. Herod could not again leave them unpunished and he imposed a heavy fine. *But Pheroras' wife aided them and paid the fine*. Salome, Herod's sister, had already reported to him that the pious wife had drawn several Pharisees to her house and that many other important people belonged to her circle.

Messianic Prophecies The Pharisees prophesied that the kingdom of Judaea would pass out of the hands of Herod and his progeny to those of Pheroras and his wife. They based this assurance (according to A. Schalit) on contemporary *messianic beliefs* current among the Pharisees, Essenes and the common people (such incidents are related in *Antiq.* XVII, 37–45). Herod recognized the gravity of the issue and killed several of the chief men but dared not proceed against Pheroras' wife. Moreover, Salome herself was also busy plotting as were many of their supporters at court. These included the eunuch Bagoas who believed in a prophecy "that he would be called the father and benefactor of him who would some day be set over the people with the title of king, for all the power would belong to him and he would give Bagoas the ability to marry and to beget children of his own." This had messianic significance, possibly inspired by a well-known message of Isaiah (49, 5–7). Salome was no less active in her opposition to Antipater than the others, helped by Pheroras' wife. When Herod tried to force her husband to divorce her, he refused and was sent away (see 572). In conclusion, Pharisaic influence certainly reappeared in the next stage of the conflict at court and two points emerge clearly from Josephus' account: 1) that Pheroras with growing aversion to his brother (Herod) was appearing to work with Antipater to oust Herod; 2) that through his wife, he was himself coming under the influence of Pharisaic circles, which accounts for his flat refusal of Herod's order. We shall revert to the relationship of Pharisees and kings in the story of Herod's son Archelaus in *War* II.

573[*a*] *Antipater's fear of Salome* Pheroras' dismissal from court and the new rise of Salome's star worried Antipater considerably and he feared that she would outmatch him and finally reveal to the king the dressed Pheroras and told him that he had to choose between his brother and his wife. Pheroras retorted that he would sooner perish than part with his wife. Greatly perplexed, Herod turned to Antipater and ordered him to break off all relations with the wife of Pheroras, her husband or with any other of her associates. Though Antipater did not violate openly this injunction, he nevertheless continued secretly to associate with them at night; (573) but, fearing the vigilance of Salome, he contrived, through friends in Italy, to visit Rome. These people wrote to Herod suggesting that Antipater should be sent before long to Caesar's court and Herod sent him off without delay with a brilliant retinue, a large sum of money and his will, which named Antipater as heir to the throne, and as Antipater's successor, Herod, the king's son by Mariamme, the high priest's daughter [*b*].

Intrigues of Syllaeus in Rome

3. (574) Syllaeus the Arab [*a*] set sail for Rome as well, contrary to Caesar's orders, and came to sustain the case against Antipater which he had previously pleaded against Nicolaus. A serious dispute had also broken out between him and his sovereign Aretas, for he had put to death a number of his friends, including Sohemus [*b*], one of the most powerful personalities in Petra. (575) He had secured the services of Phabatus, Caesar's treasurer, by a large bribe and utilized him also as his helper against Herod. However, the latter managed, through still larger bribes, to detach Phabatus from Syllaeus and tried to use him to exact from Syllaeus the money Caesar had ordered him to pay. But Syllaeus refused to pay and even accused Phabatus before Caesar of acting not for his but for Herod's interests. (576) Phabatus, indignant and still heavily bribed by Herod, betrayed Syllaeus' secrets, informing the king that he had corrupted by bribery Corinthus, a member of his bodyguard, and warned him to keep an eye on the man. The king acted on his advice, realizing that this Corinthus, though brought up in his kingdom, was an Arab by birth [*c*]. (577) Herod ordered his immediate arrest along with two other Arabs whom he found with him, one a friend of Syllaeus, the other a tribal chief [*d*]. The men were tortured and confessed that Corinthus had, by large bribes, induced them to kill Herod. In addition Saturninus, the governor of Syria, interrogated them and sent them off for trial in Rome.

4. Exile and death of Pheroras

(578) Meanwhile, Herod kept pressing Pheroras to divorce his wife, but he could find no means of punishing her, although he had good reasons to detest her; until, finally, in extreme anger, he banished both her and his brother from his realm. (579) Pheroras accepted this humiliation in a calm way and departed to his own tetrarchy [*a*], swearing that the only end of his exile should be Herod's death. He would never return to him as long as his brother lived. And he did

not revisit his brother, even during his illness, though he urgently bade him to do so, for Herod, believing that his end was near, wished to leave him certain instructions. (580) But Herod recovered unexpectedly and not long after Pheroras, himself, became sick. Herod, displaying greater compassion, visited him and tended him with affection. But Pheroras could not overcome his illness and died a few days later. (581) Although Herod had loved him to his dying day, rumors were spread that he had poisoned him. He ordered his body to be brought to Jerusalem and proclaimed a solemn national mourning to be observed, honoring him with a most impressive funeral. Such was the end to which came one of the murderers of Alexander and Aristobulus.

false side of his character. He decided to go to Rome where he would not be spied upon by Salome's police, and he secured his father's permission to leave. This mission had two specific purposes: to strengthen Herod's diplomatic activity against Syllaeus, the Nabatean, his old enemy, and to obtain the emperor's agreement to Herod's latest will. The Syllaeus affair had become more involved as the years passed, as related in 574-575.

573[*b*] Josephus states that Herod had already been granted unlimited powers to leave his kingdom to his heirs in whatever way he saw fit (454). On the other hand, it transpires from the present story that his decision on the matter of leaving his kingdom to his heirs required Augustus' approval.

574[*a*] *Intrigues of Syllaeus, the Nabatean.* In *Antiquities* XVI, 335 it is related that at about 7 BC, Nicolaus of Damascus, Herod's adviser, had in the course of an attempt at mediation between Herod and the indignant Augustus, accused Syllaeus of treasonable designs. There is no corresponding story in the present book, but it is relevant to the story at hand.

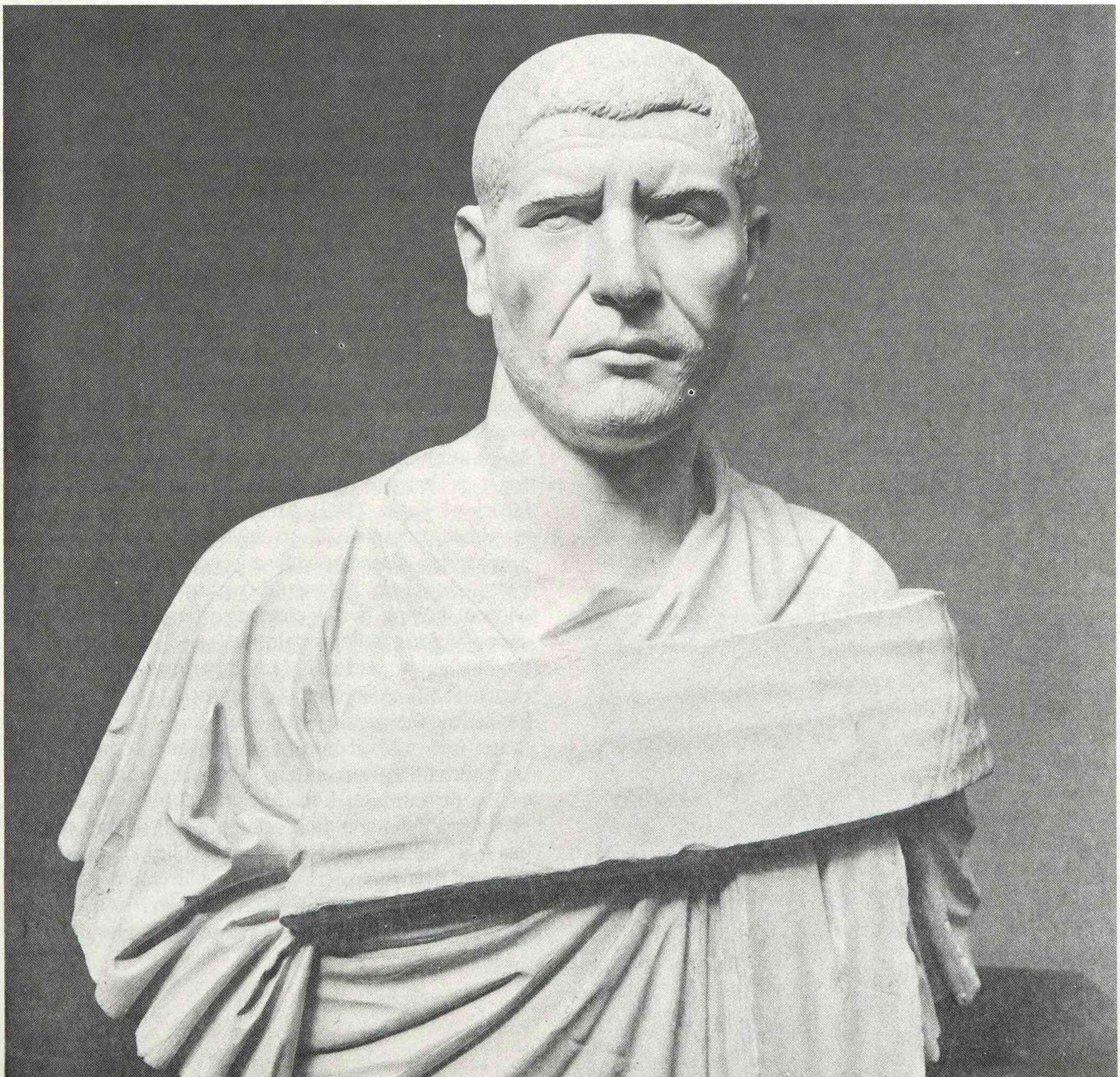
574[*b*] Sohemus or Sohem in Hebrew.

576[*c*] *Arab* refers to the *Nabateans*. Their names were Nabatean, unlike their Greek rendering; for instance, *King Aretas* is *Haretat* in Nabatean; Obadas is *Avdat* and this name is immortalized by the imposing remains of the Nabatean city by that name in the Negev (487).

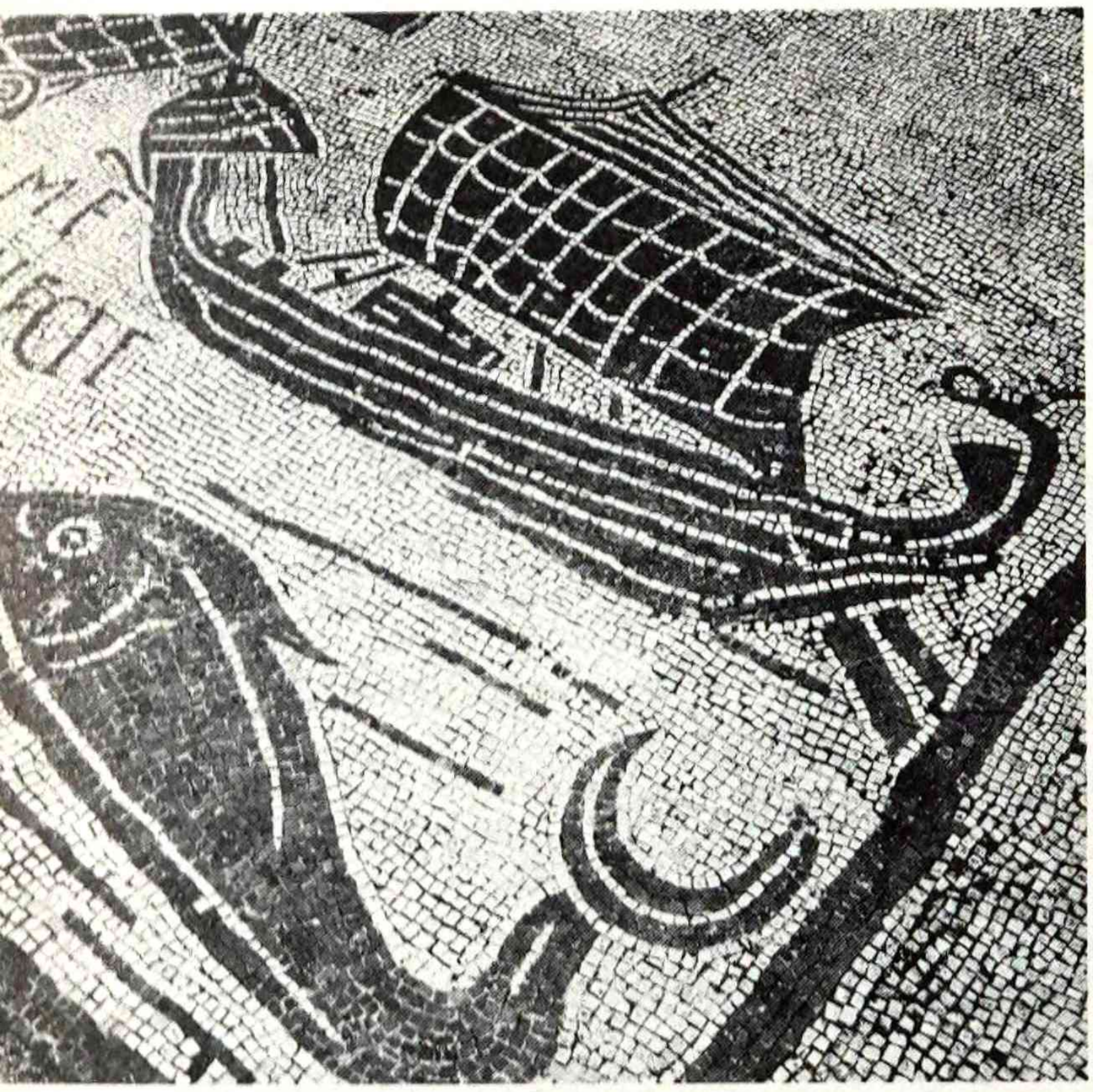
577[*d*] The equivalent of the Oriental tribal sheikh.

579[*a*] Pheroras' tetrarchy (see 483[*b*]) was Peraea in Transjordan, an area familiar from the Gospels.

Cast of a Nabatean prince (Philip); first century BC

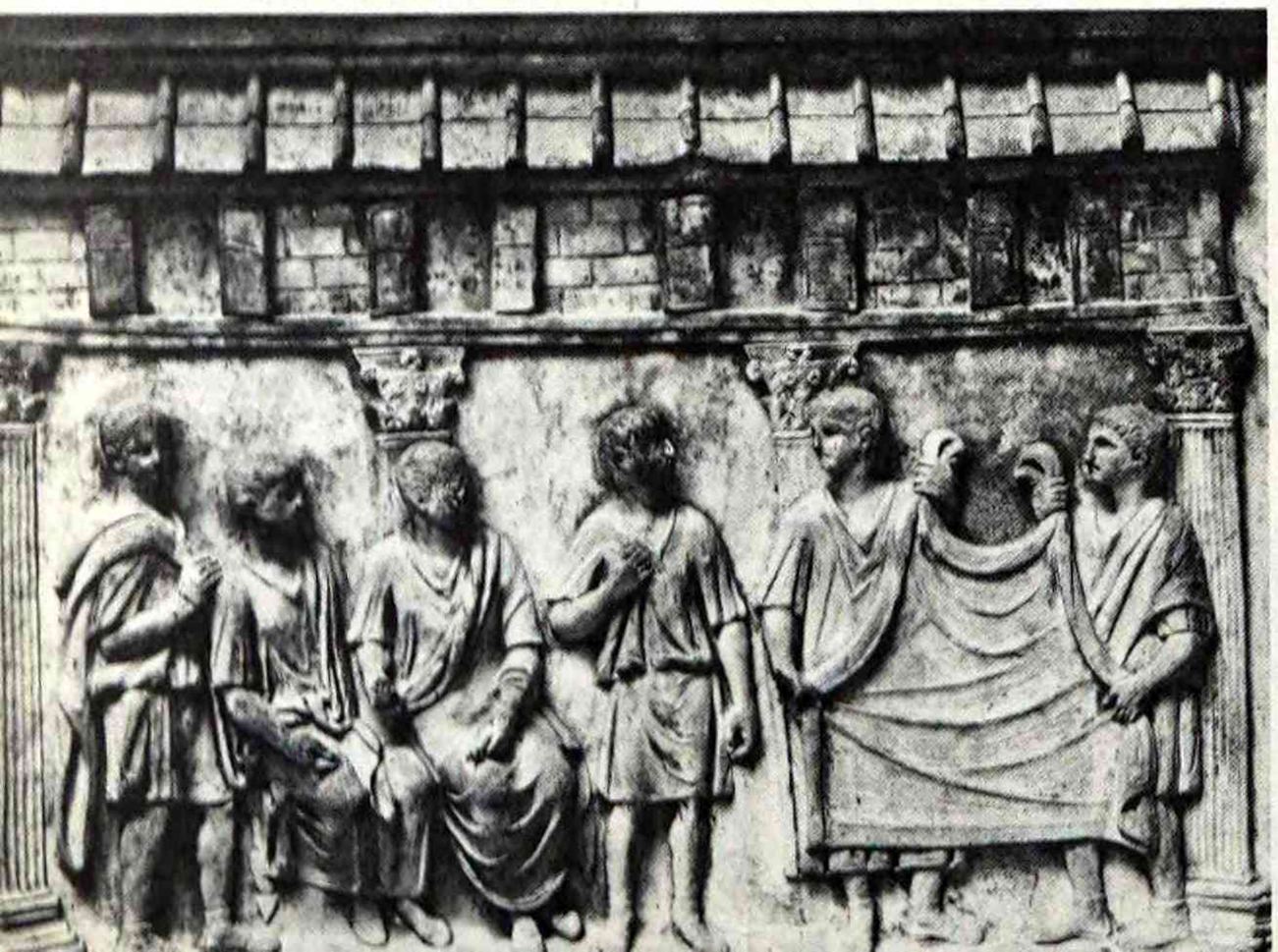


584[*a*] Doris.
587[*a*] This shows Antipater's impatience, for he knew that his father was already sick.
588[*b*] An image borrowed from Greek letters.
588[*c*] The second Mariamme, the high priest's daughter (see 562[*b*]).
590[*a*] The first occurred when he dismissed Doris (see 432) before marrying Mariamme I.
596[*a*] The *avenging demons* (see 599[*b*]).
596[*b*] The equivalent of *sheol* in biblical tradition.
598[*a*] Such small wooden boxes are not unfamiliar to Talmudic and Latin literature.
599[*b*] The ghosts (*manes* or avenging demons) turned into persecutors is reminiscent more of Roman Hellenism than Jewish angelology. The image is probably borrowed from the dramatic style in the vein of classic Greek tragedy (see 607).
599[*c*] Her father, Simeon ben Boethus was also dismissed from the office of high priest (562[*b*]; *Antiq:* XVII, 78) and Herod appointed Mattathias, son of Theophilus, a Jerusalemite, instead.
602[*a*] Herod gave his sons a Greek education in Rome so that they would not represent a foreign people in the empire, but a representative people in the Roman government of the world.



Sailing boat and dolphin in a mosaic at Ostia

Costly apparel and bedspreads in a Roman shop



Chapter XXX

1. (582) But retribution was now descending upon the true perpetrator of that crime, Antipater. This retribution arose out of the death of Pheroras, for some of the freed men of the deceased came dejectedly to the king and told him that his brother had been killed by poison; his wife, they said, had served him some unusual concoction and, after eating it, he had immediately been taken ill. (583) They added that two days previously, her mother and sister had brought from Arabia a woman who was specialized in drugs, to concoct a love potion for Pheroras; but, instead of this, she had given him a deadly poison, encouraged by Syllaeus, who knew her.

2. Revelations of the women concerning Antipater

(584) Beset with grave suspicions, the king tortured the women servants and some of the free women. One woman cried out in her agony: "May God who rules heaven and earth punish the woman who has brought upon us all our sufferings, Antipater's mother!" [*a*] This gave the king his clue, and he set out to investigate the facts even further. (585) The woman then revealed the friendship between Pheroras' mother and the ladies of his family and their clandestine meetings; she added that Pheroras and Antipater, on their return from the king, would spend the whole night drinking with those women, without allowing any servant, male or female, to be present. The information was revealed by one of the free women.

3. (586) Herod had the three slave girls tortured separately and their evidence matched that already stated: they added that by mutual agreement, Antipater had withdrawn to Rome and Pheroras to Peraëa; for they said again that after Herod had killed Alexander and Aristobulus, they and their wives would be the next victims. The man who had slain Mariamme and her offspring would spare no one; and so it is best to flee as far as possible from this ferocious beast. (587) Antipater, the woman related, at times complained to his mother that he was greyheaded already, while his father looked younger every day [*a*]; he would perhaps die before him without having had a chance to be really king. Even supposing his father would die—and when would that be—his enjoyment of his royal heritage would be very short. (588) Also there were these growing hydra-heads [*b*], the sons of Alexander and Aristobulus. His father had robbed him of hopes for the prospects of his children by nominating in his will, as the next heir to the throne after him, not one of his own children, but Herod, the son of Mariamme [*c*]. In that respect, anyway, he betrayed his total senility of mind if he thought that this section of his will would be carried out; for, he, Antipater, would take care to leave none of that family alive. (589) Never throughout history

had a father hated his children as did Herod; yet he hated his brother far more; only the other day he had given him, Antipater, a hundred talents to break off all relations with Pheroras. And when Pheroras inquired: "Why, what harm were we doing him?" Antipater replied: "Would to heaven that he would rob us of everything and leave us to live naked! But it is impossible to escape such a bloodthirsty beast, who would not even allow us to show affection for anyone. Now we must meet in secret, but we shall be able to do so openly, if we ever possess the courage and the arms of men."

4. Repudiation of Doris, Antipater's mother

(590) To these revelations, extracted from the women by torture, they added that Pheroras had planned to flee with them to Petra. Herod believed all these statements because he remembered the hundred talents, which he had mentioned to no one, except Antipater. Doris, Antipater's mother, was the first to feel the explosion of his violent anger; he stripped her of all the expensive finery he had bestowed upon her, and then dismissed her from court for the second time [*a*]. (591) He made his peace with the ladies of Pheroras' household and took care of them after their torture. But he lived in constant terror and flared up at the least suspicion, and many persons were held by him for torture for fear that any of the guilty would escape.

5. Discovery of Antipater and Pheroras' plot to poison Herod

(592) Herod's attention now turned to Antipater the Samaritan, agent of his son Antipater. He learned from him under torture that Antipater had acquired from Egypt, through Antiphilus, one of his friends, a deadly poison intended for the king; from the latter it had passed into the hands of Theudion, Antipater's uncle, who had delivered it to Pheroras, since Antipater had commissioned him to assassinate Herod while he himself was in Rome and out of reach of suspicion; and finally, that Pheroras had entrusted the poison to his wife. (593) The king sent for her and ordered her instantly to produce what she had received. She pretended to go out and fetch it and flung herself from the roof in order to forestall cross-examination and torture by the king. But, it seems that by the providence of God, whose vengeance pursued Antipater, she did not fall on her head, but on other parts of her body, and survived. (594) When she was carried to the king, he ordered that restoratives be applied, for she was only unconscious after her fall; he then asked her why she had thrown herself from the roof and swore that he would exempt her from all punishment if she would tell the truth; but if she deviated from the truth, he would crush her body by torture and leave not a limb for burial.

6. Confession of Pheroras' widow

(595) At this the woman hesitated for a moment and then said: "Why should I now guard these secrets any longer, now that Pheroras is dead? Just to save Antipater who has been the ruin of us all? Listen to me, O king, and may God hear me too, as witness to the truth of my words, for he cannot be deceived. (596) As you sat weeping beside the dying Pheroras, he called me to him and said: "My wife, much have I been mistaken in my brother's feelings towards me; I hated him who loved me so tenderly, and I plotted to kill him who is so distressed about me, even before my death. I am being punished for my wickedness. I beg you to bring that poison that Antipater left us, and that you were keeping for his destruction and destroy it promptly before my eyes, lest I carry away with me an avenging demon [*a*] to the lower world [*b*]. (597) So I brought it, as he asked me, and emptied most of it into the fire before his eyes, but I kept a little for myself against the uncertainty of the future and my fear of you."

7. (598) After making this declaration, she produced the box [*a*] that contained a mere scrap of the poison. The king then ordered the mother and brother of Antiphilus tortured; they both confessed that Antiphilus had brought the box from Egypt and asserted that he had procured the drug from another brother, a doctor from Alexandria. (599) The ghosts of Alexander and Aristobulus roamed the palace from end to end, ferreting out and denouncing hidden things [*b*] and dragging to judgment persons who seemed furthest removed from suspicion. Thus it was found that even Mariamme [*c*], the high priest's daughter, was aware of the plot; she was denounced by her brothers when put upon the rack. (600) The king's punishment for the mother's audacity fell upon her son: her Herod, whom he had appointed successor to Antipater, was struck out of the will.

Chapter XXXI

1. Antipater denounced by his freedman Bathyllus

(601) On top of all this Bathyllus now furnished corroborative evidence of Antipater's designs. He was one of his freedmen and he arrived with another noxious drug, composed of the poison of asps and the secretions of other reptiles, in order that Pheroras and his wife might be armed with this against the king, should the first poison fail to take effect.

Letters forged by Antipater to injure his brothers

(602) In addition to the intended attempt of Antipater on his father's life, Bathyllus conveyed letters fabricated by Antipater to incriminate his brothers, Archelaus and Philip. These two sons of the king, now growing youths and full of resolution, were being educated in Rome [*a*]. (603) Antipater was anxious to rid himself of the two rising up to frustrate his hopes; he forged several incriminating letters in the name of

606[*a*] *Antipater's self-appointed mission in Rome* It does not seem likely that Herod could prevent the suspicions he entertained against Antipater from being leaked to Rome, considering the awareness of Antipater's coterie in Jerusalem. The fact remains that Antipater did hear finally of Pheroras' death—and what it implied; and it does not seem less likely that this happened only a short time before Antipater's return home. Consequently, the lapse of time between the final disclosures against him—implying Herod's final and fatal decision—and his arrival in Judaea, were of short duration.

609[*a*] *Tarentum* was an ancient Greek harbor situated inside the "heel" of southern Italy. It lay along the short-route from Italy to Judaea via the coast of Anatolia or Cyprus.

610[*b*] *Celenderis* was a fortified town on the borders of Pamphylia and Cilicia in Anatolia, a port along the shortest route from Tarentum to Judaea.

613[*c*] He decided, come what may, to continue on his way home, and as quickly as possible, in the hope that his presence in Judaea and his personal influence on his father would enable him to extricate himself from the critical situation.

613[*d*] It is interesting to note Josephus' punctilious designation of the port, named after Augustus, as compared with the general appellation of the city, as Caesarea. In *Antiquities* XVII, 87 the city and port are referred to as Sebastos or Augustus, equally in honor of the emperor. Both names were interchangeable. See description of Caesarea 408-414.

614[*a*] This universal hatred is well described in *Antiquities* XVII, 88.

618[*a*] P. Quintillis Varus, legate of Syria, circa 6-4 BC.

619[*b*] She was the daughter of Herod's Hasmonean predecessor, Antigonus, not his other wife, Aristobulus' daughter (see 565).

Youth in oriental dress. Roman period

friends in Rome and prevailed on others, by bribery, to write that the princes were maligning their father; publicly bemoaning the fate of Alexander and Aristobulus and angry at being recalled by their father; for he was now summoning them back and this caused Antipater intense anxiety.

2. (604) Even before going abroad Antipater, while still in Judaea, used to acquire, at a price such incriminating letters to be written in Rome, casting abuse on his brothers. Then, in order to avoid suspicion, he went to his father and made excuses for his brothers. He argued that some of the statements therein were false, while other matters mentioned were no more than youthful indiscretions. (605) Now, in Rome, he had to pay exorbitant sums to the writers of these letters against his brothers, and he was busy confusing the evidence of such outlay. Consequently, he purchased costly apparel, many-colored bedspreads, silver and gold cups and many other precious objects in order to conceal under the enormous total of the expenditure, the wages paid for the letters. His accounts showed an expenditure of two hundred talents, the greater part of which he attributed to his suit with Syllaeus. (606) But now, even though all these petty rascalities were disclosed together with the major crime, at a time when every fresh torture loudly proclaimed him a parricide, and when the letters revealed him once more to be a fratricide—yet not one of those arriving in Rome told him of the turn of his fortunes in Judaea, though seven months passed between his exposure and his return, so intensely was he hated by all [*a*]. (607) Moreover, the lips of those who were disposed to speak were, perhaps, sealed by the ghosts of the murdered brothers. Anyway, he wrote to his father from Rome, announcing the glad tidings of his imminent return and of the honors bestowed upon him by Caesar when he took leave of him.

3. Antipater still in ignorance of his detection

(608) The king, eager to lay hands on the conspirator and fearing that he might be forewarned and on his guard, wrote him a disarming letter, couched in affectionate terms, urging him to hasten his return. If he hurried, added Herod, he would be prepared to drop his charges against his mother, for Antipater was aware of her banishment from court. (609) Previously, at Tarentum [*a*], he had received a letter announcing the death of Pheroras, and he displayed the profoundest grief for which some applauded him, attributing his bereavement to the loss of his uncle; but it appears that this emotion was due to the failure of the plot; he did not weep for Pheroras but for his accomplice. Moreover, he was already apprehensive at the thought of his past moves; had the poison been discovered? (610) But now, when he received the above-mentioned letter from his father in Cilicia, he pressed on immediately. However, on reaching the

port of Celenderis [*b*], he began to worry about his mother's disgrace and, apart from this, he already had misgivings about the future. (611) His more far-sighted friends advised him not to put himself in his father's power until he had found out the reasons for his mother's dismissal, as they feared that his arrival might only serve to swell the charges against her. (612) But the less thoughtful, more anxious to see their native land than to serve Antipater's interests, urged him to push on and not, by lingering, give his father ground for sinister suspicion and an excuse for slander to his betrayers. "Even supposing," they said, "an intrigue is now afoot against you, it is because of your absence, and no one would have dared had you been there. It is absurd to let doubtful suspicions rob you of assured happiness; rush instead to your father's arms to receive the kingdom which is tottering on his unaided shoulders." (613) Impelled by his evil genius [*c*], Antipater followed their advice and, sailing across, he arrived at the port of Augustus, at Caesarea [*d*].

4. Antipater's frigid reception in Judaea

(614) Unexpectedly he found himself in absolute isolation and solitude as everyone avoided him now and nobody dared to meet him. Though everyone had hated him all along, only now could this abhorrence be shown. In addition, fear of the king kept many aloof, for every city in the land was now curious about the Antipater scandal, while the only person ignorant of his position was Antipater himself. As brilliant as his escort had been upon his departure to Rome, so ignominious was the reception upon his return [*a*]. (615) Though he sensed what disasters had befallen him at home, he cleverly did not let it show and kept a bold face, hiding the deadly fright which weighed on his mind. (616) It was no longer possible for him to flee or retreat from the perils encompassing him; nor had he received any definite tidings of events at the palace due to the king's threats. Furthermore, he still entertained faint hopes that nothing had really been discovered, and even if anything had been unearthed, he might justify himself by impudence and guile which were his only means of salvation.

5. Antipater's confrontation of Herod

(617) Buttressed with these weapons, he made his entry into the palace unaccompanied by his retinue, for they were stopped unceremoniously at the outer gate. A visitor was within at the time—Varus, the governor of Syria. Antipater proceeded to his father's chamber and, summoning up courage, approached as though to kiss him. (618) Herod, his arms outstretched and his head averted, exclaimed: "This too fits a parricide; he would still embrace me with such accusations against him! May you die, most horrible wretch; do not touch me until you have cleared yourself of the charges. I am bringing you to trial and am appointing as judge this timely visitor, Varus [*a*]. Go and prepare your defense for tomorrow; I leave you that time for your tricks." (619) Stunned into silence by consternation, Antipater withdrew, and his mother and wife [*b*] came and informed him of all the evidence against him. He then collected himself and set out to prepare his defense.

Chapter XXXII

1. Herod's indictment

(620) On the following day the king assembled a tribunal of his relatives and friends and, in addition, invited Antipater's friends to attend. He presided with Varus and ordered all informers to be produced. Among these were servants of Antipater's mother, recently arrested while carrying a letter from her to her son saying: "Your father has discovered everything; do not come near him unless you can count on help from Caesar." (621) When these witnesses had been brought in with the rest, Antipater entered, and falling prostrate at his father's feet, said "I beg you, father, do not condemn me out of hand, but lend my defense an unprejudiced ear; for I shall, if you will permit, establish my innocence."

2. (622) Herod commanded him harshly to be silent and then addressed Varus: "I am fully persuaded that you, Varus, and every honest judge will condemn Antipater as a hopeless scoundrel. But I fear that you will also despise my own fate and that you may consider me deserving of every calamity for having fathered such sons. But, really, you ought to pity me, for I have been a most devoted father to such abominable wretches. (623) When my late sons were quite young, I thought them destined for the throne; I gave them an expensive education in Rome, introduced them to Caesar's friendship and made them an object of envy to other kings; and in the end, I found them plotting against me! Alas they died mainly to further Antipater's scheming plans; for he was young and the heir I desired above all to secure his reign. (624) And now, this foul monster, gorged with the advantage of my leniency, has insolently betrayed me. He thought I lived too long, and my advanced age left him no peace; he could not endure the thought of becoming king except by parricide! It serves me right for bringing him back, a castaway from the country, and ousting the sons which a princess bore me, just to declare him heir to the throne! (625) I admit, Varus, that I have been completely infatuated. It was I who turned these sons against me by destroying their legitimate hopes to favor Antipater. Did I ever indulge them as I have this scoundrel? In a manner, I have yielded my power in my own lifetime; I have nominated him publicly in my will as the heir to the throne and endowed him a private income of fifty talents besides other liberal contributions from my private income. Recently, when he set sail for Rome, I presented him with three hundred talents, recom-

628[*a*] *The evil genius* Herod bemoans can be described as "like father like son," as most of his entourage were aware, including his contemporary eye-witness, Nicolaus of Damascus (see 637). While Antipater's craftiness may have matched that of his father, there is no doubt that his satanic mind was moved by the same "evil genius" referred to by Herod; the only exception being that Antipater did not show the paranoid traits that marred his father's career.

632[*a*] It would appear that Antipater's exile in the early years of Herod's reign, and the tender years of Antipater's life might have been traumatic enough to generate what modern psychologists define as an "inferiority complex" which finds expression in bloated hatred and an abnormal sense of superiority over those surrounding him and a morbid trait that stamped him throughout his life.

633[*b*] *Philopater*—"he who loves his father."

635[*c*] *Evidence* The text is corrupt and inexplicable as it stands. Some lines may be missing (according to B. Isaacs).

635[*d*] Flaming candles or torches were used by torturers.

636[*e*] In contrast, *Antiq.* XVII, 106: "...and even Herod now gave signs of being somewhat shaken in his purpose although unwilling to let this be seen."

638[*a*] *Literary significance of Nicolaus' prosecution speech* It gains depth and amplitude as he, who was appointed as the prosecutor at this trial, was the same man who chronicled this episode in his voluminous *Historiae*, which is also the main source upon which Josephus drew over two generations later. This is a significant conjunction of events, told pathetically but soberly by a witness who was intimately acquainted with the *dramatis personae*. Both his account (see below) and Josephus' (our text) seem to reach at this point a pitch of tension reminiscent of the *deus ex machina* of Greek tragedy, where personified divine justice descends on the stage to point out the moral. The corresponding text of Nicolaus in *Historiae* runs:

> "...and since the later activities of Antipater were in line with his former misdeeds and he desired a plot against his father, being eager to become a king sooner and bought poison from Egypt about which one of his accomplices confessed, Herod put his slaves to torture. These divulged everything, namely, that he intended to kill his aunt and his other brothers... He contrived also a plot against the house of Caesar that was much more dreadful than the transgressions he committed against his own house... the poison as well as the confessions of the slaves under torture and the letters from Rome were publicly brought forth and the king entrusted the delivery of the speech to Nicolaus. Thus, Nicolaus lodged the accusation, Antipater spoke in his defense, while Varus and his friends acted as judges. Antipater was convicted and handed over for execution" (M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism; see* p. 254).

639[*a*] As Antipater could not provide any proof contradicting the prosecution, Varus ordered the poison to be tested to determine whether it was mortal. Whereupon Varus advised Herod to imprison Antipater. Herod at once sent a delegation to the emperor informing him of Antipater's transgressions and, in the meantime, continued to hold the prisoner.

641[*a*] *Acme,* a Jewish maidservant of the Empress Livia Drusilla, wife of Augustus, had agreed to forward Antipater's forged letters proving that Salome was conspiring to undermine the king's position in Rome.

644[*a*] The letter was found after a thorough search in the pockets of Antiphilus' servant who carried the incriminating letter to Antipater. No doubt Antipater wanted thereby to raise a suspicion in his father's mind that Salome as well conspired to kill him with the help of the empress. The Acme episode was the final shattering piece of evidence that sealed Antipater's fate.

644[*b*] See 528, referring to a forged letter to the governor of the prison of Alexandrion and attributed by Antipater to Alexander.

645[*c*] The course of events at this point is as follows: Herod first meant to execute Antipater at once. Then he decided to send him to Rome to stand trial for his crimes. However, he changed his mind, after his friends pointed out that Antipater could easily exploit his contacts in Rome in order to escape punishment. Therefore he cast him into chains and sent letters to Rome by a second delegation describing Antipater's crimes and Acme's share, the latter, later being executed in Rome.

646[*d*] As Antipater could no longer be his heir, Herod prepared a new

mending him to Caesar, alone of all my children, as his father's preserver. (626) What crime did my other sons commit comparable to that of Antipater? And what proof was brought against them as convincing as that which establishes the traitor's guilt? (627) And now, this parricide has presumed to open his mouth, hoping once more to smother the trust under his tricks. Be on your guard, Varus! I know this creature and anticipate the plausible pleading and hypocritical tears that will follow. For this is the man who advised me, when Alexander was alive, to beware of him and not to trust myself to anyone's hands; this is the man who accompanied me to my bed and looked about to see that no assassin was concealed; this is the man who watched over me in my sleep, ensured my freedom from anxiety, and comforted me in my sorrow over my victims, and examined the loyalty of his surviving brothers; this indeed is my protector, my bodyguard! (628) When I recall, Varus, his tricky, deceitful ways and his hypocrisy on every occasion, I can hardly believe that I am still alive and marvel how I escaped so deep a plotter. But since some evil genius [*a*] is bent on making my house desolate and raising up against me one after another of those who are dearest to me, let me mourn over my undeserved fate and groan inwardly for my loneliness. But no one who thirsts for my blood shall escape, not even if judgement finds all my children guilty!"

3. Antipater's speech and his defense

(629) Overcome by emotion at this point and rendered speechless, he beckoned to Nicolaus, one of his friends, to produce the evidence against him. But now Antipater, who had lain prostrate at his father's feet, raised his head and exclaimed: (630) "You, father have made my defense for me. How can I be a parricide, I who as you agree, have served as your protector throughout the years? You have declared my filial piety imposture and hypocrisy. If I were so cunning in all else, how could I have been so senseless as not to realize that, while it was difficult to conceal the concoction of so atrocious a crime from man, I could not hide it from the Judge in Heaven, who sees all and who is present everywhere? (631) Was I unaware of my brothers' fate whom God had punished for their wicked designs upon you? And then, what motive could have induced me to injure you? Was it the aspiration to the throne? But I was a sovereign already! Had I reason to fear you on other grounds? No, by preserving you, I have inspired fear in others. (632) Was it lack of money? Who had more than I at his disposal? Even if I had been the most damnable of men, with the heart of a beast of prey, would I have not been tamed, father, by your great benefactions? For as you said yourself, you recalled me from exile [*a*], you chose me over such a number of sons, you proclaimed me king in your own lifetime and you made me the envy of all by loading me with other favors. (633) Woe is me! That fatal journey! What op-

portunity I gave to those who envied me; what ample time to those who were intriguing against me! Yet it was all for your sake, father, and to fight your battles for you that I undertook that journey, to prevent Syllaeus from rejecting you in your declining years. Rome can bear witness to my loyalty and Caesar, lord of the world, who has more than once called me 'Philopater' [*b*]. Take, father, those letters from him. Their words are more trustworthy than this libel against me here; it is my sole vindication that provides the proofs which I offer of my tender feelings for you. (634) Remember how reluctantly I embarked, knowing the hidden hostility to me in this realm. It was you, father, who brought about my ruin involuntarily by compelling me to give my envious enemies an opportunity to slander me. But here I am to face my accusers; here I am, the 'parricide,' who has crossed the sea and land, and has not been molested anywhere! (635) Yet I do not ask for your love on the strength of this piece of evidence [*c*]; for I stand condemned before God and before you, father. But condemned though I am, I beseech you not to rely on admissions extracted by torture from others. Apply this fire to me [*d*]! Let the instruments of torture pass through my entrails and let no one spare this foul body! For if I am a parricide, I ought not to perish without being put on the rack." (636) Antipater's exclamations, accompanied by moans and tears, moved all to compassion, including Varus. Herod alone remained dry-eyed, unmoved and knowing that the charges were true [*e*].

4. Nicolaus as prosecutor

(637) Thereupon Nicolaus was requested by the king to address the assembly. He exposed in full Antipater's deception and dispelled the commiseration that his speech had aroused. He then, launched into a severe indictment and attributed to him all his plotting in the royal court and, in particular, the execution of his brothers, proving that they owed their death to Antipater's intrigues. He added that he had entertained further designs aimed at the surviving brothers in the line of succession: "Would the man who had prepared poison for his father have stopped short at his brothers?" (638) Proceeding next with the evidence for the poisoning charge, he brought up in successive order all the information extracted. He was aroused to indignation regarding Pheroras, at Antipater's attempt to turn him into a fratricide and, by defiling the king's closest relative, he had infected the whole court with abomination. Nicolaus concluded his speech with many observations, backed up by proofs [*a*].

5. Antipater imprisoned

(639) Varus then called on Antipater for his defense. But he said no more: "God is witness of my innocence," and remained silent and prostrate. Thereupon [*a*], Varus sent for the poison and had it given to a prisoner under sentence of death, who died instantly after drinking it. (640) He then conferred privately with Herod and after drafting his report of the proceedings to Caesar, he departed a day later. The king ordered Antipater to be cast in chains and dispatched messengers to the emperor informing him of the calamitous events.

6. Discovery of Antipater's plot against Salome

(641) It was subsequently discovered that Antipater had plotted against Salome too. For a servant of Antiphilus arrived from Rome with a letter from a maidservant of Livia, named Acme [*a*]; she wrote to the king that she had found among Livia's papers some letters from Salome, which she transmitted privately to him, as his well-wisher. (642) The letters of Salome which contained most bitter attacks and blasting condemnations of his conduct were forgeries of Antipater, who had bribed Acme to send them to Herod. (643) His complicity was revealed in the letter which the woman addressed at the same time to him, saying: "I have written to your father as you desired and forwarded these letters. I feel sure that, upon reading them, he will not spare his sister. Please remember, when all is over, what you promised me."

7. (644) When this letter came to light [*a*] together with those concocted to harm Salome, the king began to suspect that the letters incriminating Alexander [*b*] were also forged. He was deeply distressed at the thought that he had almost killed his sister as a result of Antipater's plotting. He decided, therefore, not to delay punishing Antipater for all his crimes. (645) While proceeding to extreme measures [*c*] against Antipater, he was held up by a serious illness. He wrote to Caesar, however, in the matter of Acme and the fraud which had been perpetrated on Salome. (646) He also called for his will and modified it. He now named Antipas king, disregarding his eldest sons, Archelaus and Philip [*d*], who had also been slandered by Antipater. To Caesar he bequeathed, apart from gifts in kind, one thousand talents; to the empress, children, friends and freedmen of the emperor, about five hundred [*e*]; to the other members of his family he bequeathed large tracts of territory and considerable possessions. He honored his sister Salome with the most magnificent presents of all. Those were the amendments Herod made to his will.

will naming Herod Antipas as his successor. He no longer trusted his sons Archelaus and Philip, whom Antipater had discredited on account of their conduct in Rome, and this still rankled in Herod's mind (see 602). Just before his death he changed his will once more (see 646, 668). The last events not only broke his indomitable spirit, but his health as well, and he fell deathly ill.

646[*e*] *Herod's tremendous wealth* The magnitude of his huge legacies is impressive in ancient terms, among them one thousand, five hundred talents to Augustus and the imperial family, the Judaean talent being equivalent to three thousand shekels or ten thousand Attic drachmae. This seems to imply an even larger total of Herod's direct taxes from the people, which helped to cover his enormous expenses and public works all over the kingdom. It is known, however, that Herod had sources of income other than the taxes of his subjects. They included the vast

estates (*'ahuzoth* and *har hamelekh'* in Hebrew) which were further increased by confiscations. Secondly, revenues from the commercial and industrial ventures which his father Antipater who was a financier, and he himself, had initiated and controlled. A stray notice in *Antiquities* XVI, 128 speaks of his contract for half the revenues of the copper mines in Cyprus for which he paid Augustus three hundred talents in 12 BC. Other stray notices suggest how great his economic resources were, some probably deriving from monopolies and, largely, the thriving international marine trade of Caesarea. Herod was one of the richest men in Judaea in his own right and one of the most affluent in the Roman imperium. In comparison to this multimillionaire in shekels, it may be noted that a few *drachmae* (three thousand to the talent) could feed a family daily and that the half-shekel payment of the people towards the maintenance of the Temple was considered a generous contribution.

648[*a*] The term "doctors" or "sophists" used by the Greeks is borrowed by Josephus as an equivalent for "rabbis" or teachers. Regarding the names of the rabbis in question, the best manuscript of *War* has Sepphoraios, and that is what an updated translation should give. The corresponding passage in *Antiquities* XVII, 149 has Sariphaios or Pharisaios, and Margalothes, which bring the names of these rabbis closer to their Hebrew equivalent, namely Judah ben Zarifai and Mattityahu ben Margalith (according to B. Isaac, the Hebrew University, and the late G. Alon). The passage in *Antiquities* relates that these two Pharisee rabbis "were the most learned of the Jews and unrivaled interpreters of the ancestral laws; they were men especially dear to the people because they educated the youth, etc..." It is known that the Temple courts and its outer halls served as a popular center of learning for *halakha* (laws), the tenets of the faith and Jewish thought; this center was comparable, in a way, to a popular academy which brought together the teachers and the people. Many of these rabbinical dissertations were assembled and codified in the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds published later. Jesus taught also in the Temple courts, and so did the first Judaeo-Christians who gathered there daily to preach their gospel.

648[*b*] This is the *halakha,* the accepted tradition of interpretation of the written law. Collections of such oral laws or *halakhot* existed long before the compilation of the Mishnah at the end of the second century AD.

650[*c*] The golden eagle decorating the top of the gate was a Roman symbol and was thus an abomination to the Jews who did not tolerate representations or images of men or animals in their houses, their coins and certainly the Temple.

651[*a*] *Herod's winter palace at Jericho* Herod spent his last days (it was rumored that he had already died) at Jericho in one of his two favorite palaces (the other was in Masada; *War* II, 408). The king's association with Jericho's lush valley dates from the period that corresponded to the tragic drowning of prince Jonathan in the pool adjoining the Hasmonean Palace (see 437 and illustrations) on the northern bank of the Wadi Kelt facing modern Jericho, and of the fortifications he put up in the area (see 407, 417). This association was followed by a period of uninterrupted development of the region that took place before and during his reign (after Antony had returned to him the lands expropriated by Cleopatra, see 362). In fact, the Jericho valley turned out to be Judaea's most thickly populated area in the last three centuries BC. A Talmudic source relates that there were as many priests in that area as in Jerusalem and estimated—with clear exaggeration—24,000! Herod's building activity there dates mainly to the last decade of his reign, circa 15 BC.

The villa over the hoard of coins One of the buildings of the palace complex was a villa that he had built over the former Hasmonean palace on a mound. Interestingly enough, when E. Netzer recently excavated the adjoining area which covered the ledge beside the Hasmonean pool (see 407 and diagram), he discovered that Herod had it covered with earth and converted it into a garden. In this earthen cover was discovered a hoard of twenty coins minted by Mattathias Antigonus, the last Hasmonean king (40–37 BC), Herod's bitterest enemy, who was executed by Mark Antony (see 357).

The palace, villas, terraces and baths Herod built his palace, its appurtenances, swimming-pools and numerous *mikvehs* (purification baths) in which laymen and numerous priests, and high priests, immersed themselves after their swim in the pools. The new Herodion palace

Chapter XXXIII

1. Herod's last illness

(647) His illness was getting worse steadily, the disease having struck him old and despondent. He was now nearly seventy, and his spirit was depressed by his tragic experiences with his children, so that even in health he no longer enjoyed the good things of life. His illness was further intensified by the thought that Antipater was still alive; he was determined that his execution should be no casual affair, but must be undertaken seriously after his recovery.

2. Insurrection over the sacrilegious eagle

(648) In the midst of these troubles there occurred a popular uprising. There were two rabbis [*a*] in the capital well known as exponents of the ancestral laws of the land [*b*], and held in the highest esteem by the whole nation, namely, Judah, the son of Sepphoraios, and Matthias, the son of Margalus. (649) Their lessons on the law were widely attended by many young students, and they attracted daily a host of men in their prime. When they learned that the king was passing away gradually by sickness and despondency, they threw out hints to their followers that this was the best moment to exact vengeance on behalf of God and to pull down the structures which had been erected contrary to ancestral laws. (650) Although it was unlawful to place in the Temple images or busts [*c*] or the likeness of any living being, the king had erected a golden eagle over the great gate! The rabbis urged their followers to pull the eagle down, saying that even if some danger were involved, it was noble to die for the sake of the ancestral laws; for the souls of those who came to such an end gained immortality and eternal happiness; whereas the poor-spirited, who had no knowledge of their teachings through ignorance, clung to life and chose death which would come through disease rather than heroic deeds.

complex was situated on the northern bank. It overlooked an elaborate ornamental sunken garden situated on the southern bank (see reconstruction diagram). This was part of the master plan and included terraced slopes, a central hemicycle, decorated niches, double colonnades and porticoes decorated with frescoes at either end of the garden, as illustrated. The northern wing of the palace was erected on a wide natural plateau. It contained two open courts as well as a large reception hall, a bathing complex and various rooms which surrounded the area. The large reception hall measured 90×60 ft. Its walls were decorated with frescoes painted to simulate marble and a colonnade ran along three sides of the hall; the impressions of the columns marked in the floor is clearly visible in our illustration and diagram of the hall. Two colonnaded courts and domed structures extended beyond and led to the luxurious bath complex that consisted of five rooms—including an entrance hall to undress in, two warm rooms, a hot room and a cold room, all in traditional Roman style. The frigidarium containing a cold water pool (No. 4 in the reconstruction diagram and illustration) is the most striking room. It is round with four semi-circular niches whose original floor has been preserved. A below-level construction was apparently the support for a basin or pool in which the actual bathing took place. The two lovely patterns in the walls of the frigidarium form most interesting architectural features, known as *opus quadratum* and *opus reticularum,* con-

3. The Zealot martyrs

(651) While they were preaching in this vein, it was rumored that the king was dying [*a*] and this encouraged the young men to undertake the task with greater confidence. At mid-day, accordingly, when crowds of people walked about the Temple courts, they lowered themselves by stout ropes from the roof [*b*] and began chopping off the golden eagle with hatchets. (652) Immediately the news reached the king's officer [*c*] who hurried to the spot with a large force, seized about forty young men [*d*] and took them to the king. (653) He began by asking them whether they had dared to cut down the golden eagle. They admitted it. "Who told you to do this?" he continued. "The law of our fathers" [*e*]. "And why are you so cheerful, when you are about to be executed?" "Because after death, we shall enjoy greater blessings" [*e*]

The dissertations over ancestral Jewish laws, as exemplified by Rabbi Judah, son of Sepphoraios, are gathered in the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds, as illustrated by this page of the Tractate Bava Metzia of the Babylonian Talmud

sisting of a lattice formed from uniformly cut stones; concrete was then poured over this to strengthen it and fill the core of the wall. This is described as "Roman concrete" which was used side by side with mud brick walls throughout the northern wing of the palace.

651[*b*] *Shape of the Temple gates* The main gates of the Temple area consisted of a high ceilinged vestibule built of massive ashlars and covered by a stone roof. The eagle was affixed to the archway over the entrance to the vestibule.

652[*c*] *Status of public security in Jerusalem under Herod's administration* The precise responsibility of "the king's officer" who was involved in the repercussions over which the removal of the eagle was a matter of public security over which he presided. This casts some light in turn on the administrative status of Jerusalem. According to L. I. Levine (*Caesarea under Roman Rule,* p. 17), Herod's Hellenizing proclivities were institutionalized in the organization and administration of cities under his rule. Long before this time, Jerusalem was probably converted into a *polis* (autonomous city) with its own *archons* or royal officials and boulé (Council). Generally speaking, autonomy in Herodian cities, including Jerusalem, was limited to internal affairs and, even then, fell under the watchful eye of an *archon* or a military *strategos* (military governor) stationed in Jerusalem. Thus Herod held the reins of power within his kingdom and, while the people assembled frequently, to be lawful, such gatherings had to be held under the archon's aegis. The people listened, but were rarely active. If someone spoke up against the king, he risked immediate seizure and imprisonment, as befell Tiro in Caesarea (see 544–550). Such was Herod's despotic hegemony over every part of his kingdom, even when he lay moribund in Jericho.

652[*d*] They were Zealots, fired by the idealism described by Josephus. Their open act of courage and refusal to evade responsibility made them martyrs and heroes.

653[*e*] *The Zealots and their beliefs in immortality* Their belief in immortality and resurrection has its ground roots in the initial stages of Pharisaism as a result of their predecessors, the "Hassidim", who had insisted upon the concept of eventual resurrection as one of their articles of faith. Their hope found expression in some pre-Maccabean apocryphal writings, and in the Hasmonean upheaval. We have seen earlier that the Jewish warriors and the Hassidim who formed their *corps d'elite* became religious martyrs for whom the idea of a happier existence in the world beyond developed into more than a psychological compensation. The Zealots, who combined in their psyche the early idealism of the Hassidim with the anti-Hellenistic and anti-Roman bias of Ezekias and Judas of Galilee (204; *War* II, 56, 118, 433) endorsed the concept of resurrection with great fervor. We will find historical evidence spanning over seventy years of the physical continuity of the leadership in Judas' Galilean family of Zealot rebels. Josephus mentions in his description of the Pharisees (*War* II, 162) and in his famous exhortation in *War* II, 373–375 "the most holy place in heaven is allocated to the righteous, etc." Belief in the idea of the hereafter finds concrete expression in the inscriptions on tombstones perpetuating the memory of the dead and even more emphatically in the erection of mausoleums since earliest times. Examples of the latter are the imposing monuments erected to Hasmonean and other contemporary Jewish grandees and high priests in the Kidron Valley of Jerusalem and other places. The mausoleum itself came to be called *nephesh* (soul or *psyche* in the Greek equivalent). Furthermore, the funeral rites of this and subsequent periods in ancient Palestine were permeated with the hope of the hereafter. To begin with, the cemetery was given the characteristic name *beth-almin* (house of eternity), and this was imbued in the Judaism of the period with deep eschatological (death and the beyond) yearnings. After the decay of their bodies in the graves, the bones of the dead were preserved in *ossuaries* (and the large sarcophagi of the privileged) in preparation for the day when the trumpets would call the dead to rise. Collecting bones for these and other reasons is mentioned as one of the specific duties of the family and of Jewish confraternities charged with attending the dead. The many hundreds of ossuaries found throughout the necropolis surrounding Jerusalem and in scores of other ancient burial sites all attest to this pious custom.

653[*e*] On being brought before the king they proudly defended their deed in the name of God and his Laws (*Antiq.* XVII, 149–167).

654[*a*] The corresponding episode is related in *Antiq.* XVII, 149–167. The archaeological background is described in 659[*a*]. The burning of the rabbis occurred on March 13th, 4 BC on which there was an eclipse of the moon as mentioned in the corresponding description in *Antiquities.*

656[*a*] *What did Herod die of?* The symptoms are described somewhat differently in *Antiquities* XVII, 168–169 and help to clarify the picture. Modern medical opinions are divided on the possible diagnosis: It could have been any or a combination of cancer of the bowels, cirrhosis of the liver, and severe diabetes as well as arteriosclerosis and thrombosis in the abdominal region complicated by terminal cirrhosis. The Bible declares that Herod was "eaten by worms and died" (Acts of the Apostles 12, 23).

656[*b*] According to the prophecy of Menahem the Essene (*Antiq.* XV, 376) Herod's tragic end was seen as an expression of God's anger at his sinful ways. This is also stated clearly in the Acts of the Apostles 12, 23.

657[*c*] *Callirrhoe* A group of hot springs on the northeastern shore of the Dead Sea (modern 'Uyûn-eṣ-Ṣâra). It is also referred to by Pliny (*Natural History* V, 16) and the Talmud. The clearest illustration is provided by the fifth century AD Madeba mosaic uncovered at Madeba in Transjordan. It shows three buildings: a spring house, a *nymphaeum* and another construction through which a stream flows from the foot of the mountains of Moab and passes through a pool into the Dead Sea. Archaeologists have confirmed that several buildings formerly stood on the shore with pools into which the water was channelled from the hot springs, as well as the remains of a *nymphaeum* with a porch (see illustration of the mosaic).

659[*a*] *The drama at the "hippodrome"* Interpreters have for many years thought that Josephus mentioned the "hippodrome" when he really meant the theater as the place where the Jews were herded, surrounded by an armed guard, as explained above, Herod's real intention was not to order Salome, his sister, to put them to death, when he breathed his last and thus to stifle the people's joy, but probably to hold the imprisoned crowd of notables as *hostages* for his heirs while the latter established their succession without hindrance and opposition of the Jewish leaders. Herod would hardly have committed wholesale murder

4. (654) These events provoked the king to such rage that he overcame his sickness and had himself carried to a public meeting [*a*]. He accused the men at great length as temple-robbers, who, pleading the law as an excuse, had some more ambitious plots, and demanded their punishment for sacrilege. (655) The people, fearing wholesale prosecution, begged him to punish those who had recommended the deed and those who had been caught in the act, and to take no action against the rest. The king agreed reluctantly; those who had lowered themselves from the roof, together with the rabbis, he burnt alive [*b*]; the rest of the men he seized and handed to his attendants for execution.

5. The moribund Herod

(656) From then on Herod's sickness spread through his whole body, accompanied by various painful symptoms. He had fever, though not high, an unbearable itching all over his body, constant pain in the intestines, tumors on the feet as in dropsy, inflammation of the abdomen, and gangrene of the genitals, producing worms, besides respiration problems and convulsions in all his limbs [*a*]. The diviners expressed their opinion that his diseases were a punishment for what he had done to the rabbis [*b*]. (657) But though he was wrestling with so many disorders he clung to life, hoping for recovery, and tried new remedies. Accordingly, he crossed the Jordan and took the warm baths at Callirrhoe [*c*], whose waters flow into Lake

Salt-covered rocks and trees on the eastern shores of the Dead Sea near Callirhoe

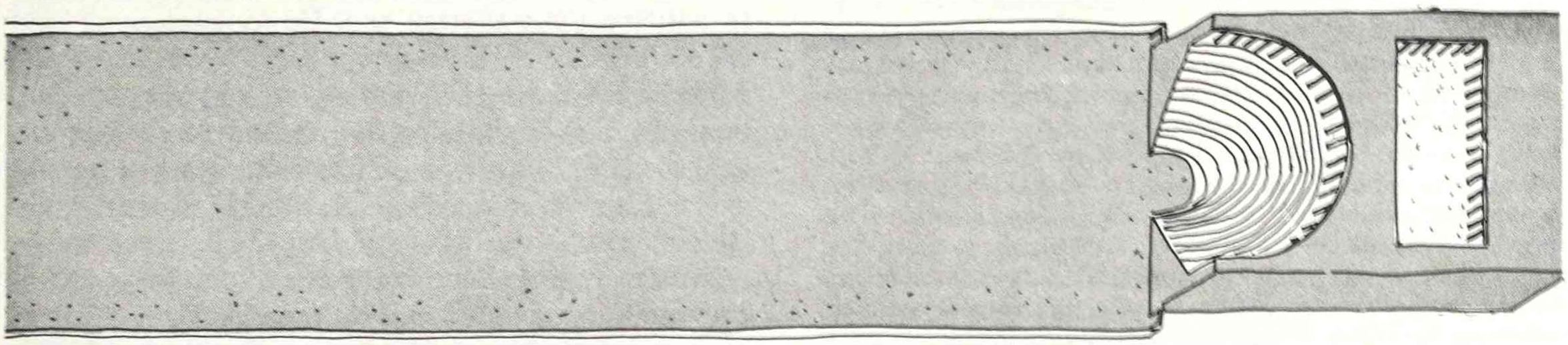
Ashphaltitis, and are potable and sweet. The doctors there decided to warm his whole body with hot oil by lowering him into a full bath; he fainted and turned up his eyes as if he were dead. (658) The loud cries of his attendants brought him back to consciousness, but now having lost his hopes for recovery, he ordered the distribution of fifty drachmas a head to his soldiers and large gratuities to their officers and to his friends.

6. Arrest of the notables at Jericho

(659) He started on the return journey and arrived at Jericho in a melancholy state; and in virtual challenge to death itself he proceeded to devise a nefarious deed. He assembled the most eminent men of every village in the whole of Judaea and had them locked up in the hippodrome [*a*]. (660) Then he sent for his sister Salome and her husband Alexas and said: "I know the

by proxy, as it were, as this would have upset the succession plans and would also have aroused the emperor's anger. This interpretation of Herod's motives is justified by subsequent developments as will be seen below, and in the opening paragraph of Book II, with its corresponding story in *Antiquities* XVII, 230.

The unusual hippodrome complex at Jericho An area of arable land at the foot of Tel-es-Samara, north of Jericho, was excavated by E. Netzer in 1976 and revealed the curious complex of a large rectangular hippodrome 315 m. × 84 m. formerly surrounded by a wall. It had no stone seats of its own for spectators as they could make use of 3000-4000 seats in the adjoining theater erected at a height of some 13 m. above the race course. Behind the theater, again about 10-13 m. higher stood a 70 m. × 70 m. elevated platform on which Herod's architects built villas, colonnaded courts and a gymnasium containing a wrestling school (palaestra) at the center to accommodate the numerous guests and serve also as an amusement center or winter resort. Josephus does not mention the presence of a theater in Jericho, but according to E. Netzer's description, it did exist. In the light of the remains of structures found in this area, it is obvious that the whole complex actually fulfilled simultaneously the combined functions of a theater, an amphitheater (an



Site of the hippodrome of Jericho and its plan

oval arena surrounded by stone seats) and a hippodrome (see diagram). This was a unique combination without equal in antiquity, since larger cities in the Greco-Roman world built these structures separately and at different places.

660[*b*] *Harsh views of Herod bigger Antiq.* XVII, 191 sums up the career of the king whose rule spanned times of unprecedented trouble for the Jewish people. "He was a man who was cruel to all alike and one who easily gave way to anger and was contemptuous of justice." The *Assumption of Moses,* an apocryphal anonymous composition written a short time after Herod's death, says: "And after the Hasmoneans there ruled a ruthless king who was not from the priestly family, a terrible man who knew no shame and judged them as they deserved; he cut off their heads with his sword and interred their corpses in remote places... and he killed old people and showed no mercy on young ones; they suffered bitterly in their country because of their fear of him; and he inflicted severe punishment on them such as the Egyptians had inflicted upon them; and he punished them four and thirty years" (length of his reign); (*6*, 2–7). The Talmud also describes him as the "Idumaean slave" of the Hasmonean family who "murdered the family of his masters and left no trace even of the children," and it was he who put to death all the Sages and left no one but Baba, the son of Buta that he might take counsel of him; he placed a wreath of leeches on his head and gouged out his eyes (B. Bathra 3[*b*]–4[*a*]). In Matthew's Gospel, Herod is portrayed as a cruel king, the murderer of male infants of Bethlehem (2, 16). The Matthean account is the only source for this story; secular history is silent on this point. In the "Martyrdom of Matthew," in the Apocryphal New Testament: "Jesus rose from the dead, then Death and Pestilence came back to Amente to protect it, but they found it wholly desolate, only three souls were left in it: Herod(?), Cain and Judas ... But tell me, where is the ungodly Herod? 'He dwelleth in hell, and there is prepared for him five unquenchable, unending hells, boiling wine, the worm that sleepeth not, because he killed three thousand children'." The last statistic is impossibly high. See 673[*e*]: A historian's assessment of Herod.

661[*a*] Acme's episode; compare 641–643.

664[*b*] *Hyrcania* The Jordan valley fortress, situated about eight miles south-east of Jerusalem, which Herod captured from Antigonus in about 32 BC (see 364) and the last refuge of the Hasmoneans. It is identified with present day Khirbet-el-Mird. An archaeological survey revealed a double rampart surrounding the flattened top of the mountain, an aqueduct for rain-water and ruins from the Roman and Byzantine periods.

664[*c*] Both princes were children of Malthace, the Samaritan wife (see 562).

665[*a*] He reigned from 40–4 BC.

667[*b*] Ptolemy was Herod's "most honored of friends" (473) as well as his adviser and executor.

668[*c*] *Partition of Herod's kingdom* Under the title of *tetrarch,* or provincial ruler, Antipas reigned over Galilee and Peraea, the Jewish section of Transjordan; his brother Philip became tetrarch of Trachonitis, Batanaea, Gaulanitis (Gaulan) and the region of the Jordan sources (Philippi, Paneas; and see map and notes to 95[*d*], [*e*]. It appears that Herod also intended the various regions to maintain a degree of unity through subordination of the two tetrarchs to king Archelaus.

669[*d*] This was his fourth will, far different from the other three. There are no grounds to believe that Herod was influenced in his last decision by the emperor. In any case, for the will to take effect, it required the emperor's confirmation, as stipulated in the will itself.

672[*a*] *The funeral* The first in the procession were his guards, carrying their lances, followed by the foreign contingents which had figured prominently in Herod's military career; they took their place according to ethnic groupings, precedence of rank, and in full war regalia.

673[*b*] Carrying burning spices was an ancient custom in funerals, though discontinued later; it is preserved in certain eastern non-Jewish funerals to this day. Incense and perfume were burnt near the body for several centuries BC.

673[*c*] The distance from Jerusalem to Herodion is only ten miles (16.5 kms). As regards the two hundred furlongs (namely 24 miles or 39 kms), some commentators assumed that Josephus referred to the distance from Jericho, via Jerusalem.

Jews will celebrate my death with a festival [*b*], but I can be mourned on other people's accounts and make sure of a magnificent funeral if you will do as I tell you: Surround these men under guard with soldiers as soon as I die, and kill them all; then, unwillingly, every household in Judaea will weep for me!"

7. Herod's suicide attempt; execution of Antipater

(661) While he was giving these instructions, he received dispatches from his ambassadors at Rome, informing him that Acme [*a*] had been executed by Caesar's command and Antipater condemned to death; but, the dispatch went on to say, that if his father preferred merely to banish him, he had Caesar's permission to do so. (662) For a while Herod felt somewhat more cheerful, but later he was so tormented by lack of food and a racking cough that his sufferings overpowered him and he made an effort to anticipate his allotted end. He took an apple and asked for a knife, it being his habit to cut up apples when he ate them; then looking around to make sure there was no one to stop him, he raised his hand to stab himself. But his cousin Achiabus dashed up and stopped him by seizing his hand. (663) Instantly loud lamentations arose as if the king had passed away. Antipater, quickly hearing the news, took heart and in his delight begged his jailers, promising payment in kind, to loosen him and let him go. But the head jailer not only prevented this but ran and told the king of his attempt. (664) Herod, uttering a shout louder than seemed possible in so sick a man, at once sent guards to kill Antipater. After ordering his body to be interred in Hyrcania [*b*], he again modified his will, nominating Archelaus, his eldest son and brother of Antipas as heir, and Antipas as tetrarch [*c*].

8. Herod's death

(665) Herod survived his son's execution by only five days. Counting from the date when he put Antigonus to death and assumed control of the state, his reign lasted thirty-four years; and thirty-seven, reckoning from his proclamation by the Romans as king [*a*]. In most respects he enjoyed fortune if ever a man did: he came to the throne though he was a commoner, occupied it a very long time, then left it to his children, but in his family life he was most unfortunate.

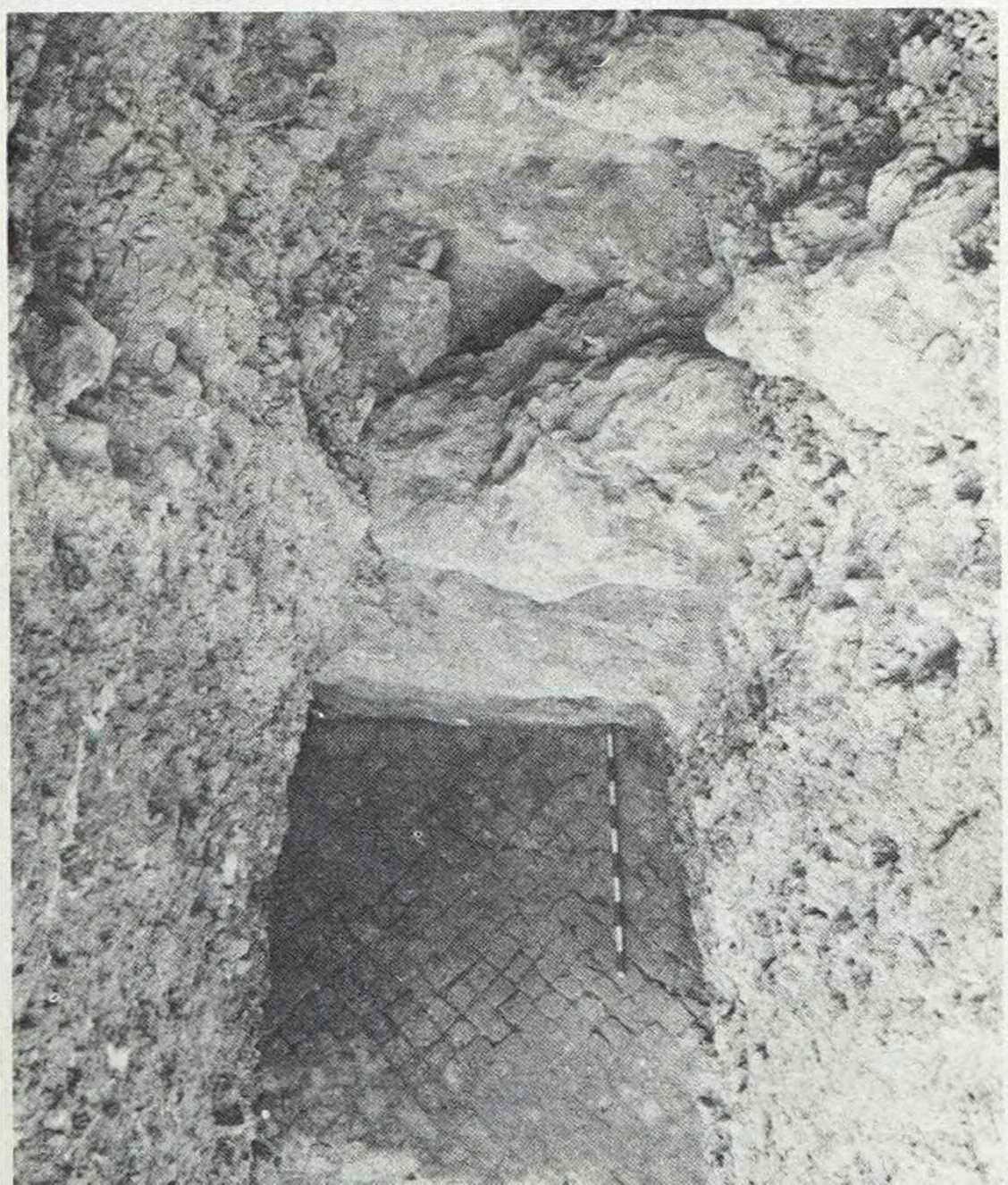
Herod's last will and partition of the kingdom

(666) Before the army had learned that he was dead, Salome left the palace with her husband and released the prisoners whom Herod had ordered to be put to death. She told them that the king had changed his mind and now dismissed them all to their homes. Only when they left did she and her husband announce the news to the soldiers, and summoned them with the rest of the people to a joint meeting in the amphitheater at Jericho. (667) Here Ptolemy [*b*] came forward, entrusted by the king with his signet ring; he pronounced a warm tribute to the king, delivered a

speech to the people present and read aloud the letter Herod had left for the troops, in which he made an earnest appeal for loyalty to his successor. (668) After this letter he opened the codicil to the will: under these Philip [*c*] was named heir to Trachonitis and the neighboring districts; Antipas, mentioned above, tetrarch and Archelaus king. (669) Archelaus was ordered to take Herod's ring to Caesar along with the state documents related to the administration of the realm, under seal, as Caesar was in sole charge of all his dispositions and executor of his will [*d*]. All other provisions of the earlier will remained valid.

9. Herod's funeral

(670) Instantly, Archelaus was hailed with acclamations and congratulations; and the troops coming forward in companies with the civilians, pledged their loyalty and joined in prayers for God's blessing. Then they turned to the task of the king's funeral. (671) Everything was done by Archelaus to add to the magnificence of the ceremony; he brought forth all the royal ornaments to be carried in procession in honor of the deceased. The bier was of solid gold, studded with precious stones and draped with the richest purple embroidered with various colors. On it lay the body wrapped in a crimson robe, with a diadem resting on the head, and above that a golden crown and the scepter by the right hand. (672) Around the bier were Herod's sons and a host of relatives, followed by his guards and the Thracian contingent, Germans and Gauls, all equipped for war [*a*]. (673) The remainder of the troops marched in front, armed and in perfect order, led by their commanders and officers, and followed by five hundred of the house slaves and freedmen, carrying spices [*b*]. The body was carried for a distance of two hundred furlongs [*c*] to Herodion [*d*], where the late king commanded it to be interred. So ended the reign of Herod [*e*].

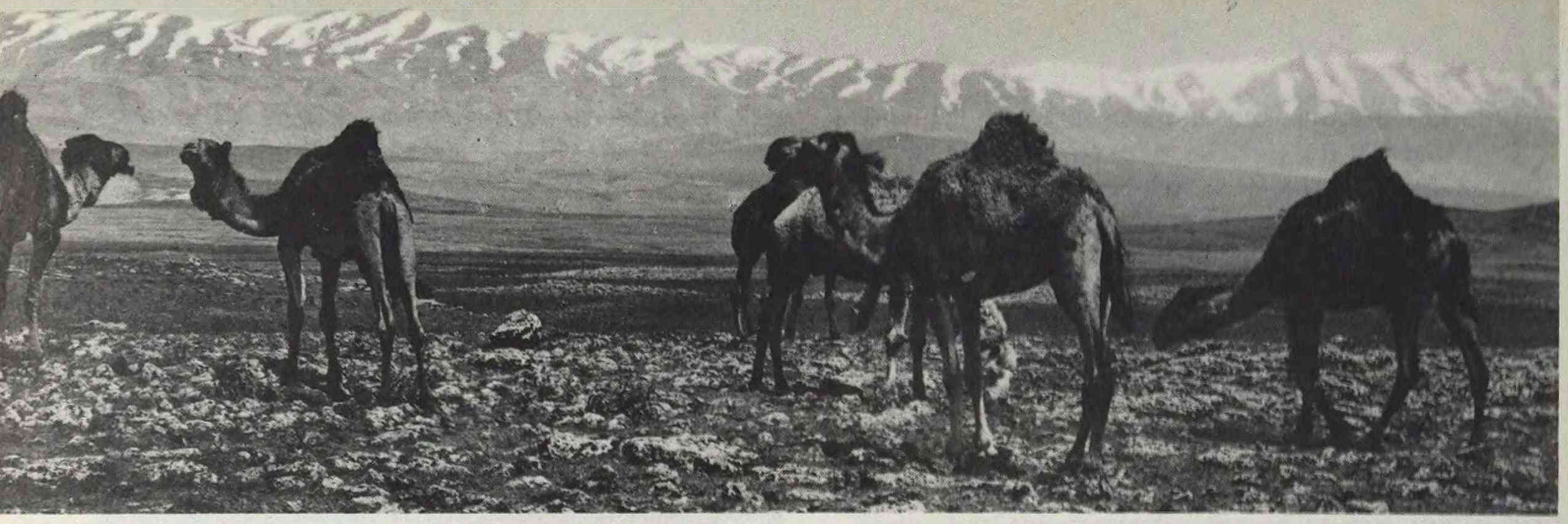


673[*d*] *Herodion* Described in 419–421. Herod had built there a magnificent palace and his own mausoleum. This latter has not been discovered in the course of extensive excavations and restorations.

673[*e*] *A historian's assessment of Herod* At the close of Herod's life and career, the question arises: To what extent were his contemporaries justified, or not quite justified, in passing negative or positive judgement upon him? We are familiar with Josephus' and other opinions, as expressed in 660[*b*]. However, is this verdict and the judgement of Herod's Judaean subjects the only criterion that a modern historian can share? Professor A. Schalit, whose book *King Herod—Portrait of a Ruler* (in Hebrew, Jerusalem) which still remains the standard work on Herod, strives to be fair to Herod. On the one hand he does not minimize the cost in human life during Herod's struggle to maintain himself and his family in power, but on the other hand he points out the concrete reforms and innovations during his reign. He catalogs his territorial expansion—equal to David's empire—his administration and economic stability and vast building activity, including the building of the Temple—an incredible enterprise, partly excavated by Professor B. Mazar at the foot of Temple Mount and described in his *Mountain of the Lord*. This is a record of Herod's efforts to fit the Jews of Judaea into the general pattern of progress of the Roman Empire. A historian must take into consideration that many of the evils which were associated with him as king must be judged not only by the verdict of the Jews of that or subsequent periods, or even by our own moral standards, but by Hellenistic standards and practices typical of their royal courts (a Hasmonean predecessor, King Alexander Jannaeus was no less infamous and cruel, (see 91–98). From this point of view, Herod cannot be considered in a harsher light than his coevals when he was exercising the prerogative of projecting his position, his person and his political philosophy (his career and intellectual brilliance indicate that he had one in the customary manner). Although his aspirations for his people could never be carried out, his intentions were good. Even though his outstretched hand could not be grasped by most of his subjects, it was nevertheless proffered by Herod as "King of the Jews." From the vantage point of an historian, Herod was a great man. This most of his subjects could not accept for the reasons cited, and because they could not acknowledge Herod's sphere of reference as their own. The exception to this was the group of "Herodians" mentioned mainly in the New Testament who, for the following two generations, apparently accepted such terms of reference, as we shall see.

But a historian who views the total picture in a historical perspective and at a remove of 2000 years can more easily gauge both the dark and the brilliant aspects in the life of ancient man and must weigh the positive and negative aspects in contraposition to each other, while disassociating himself from the immediate impact of contemporary events on the Jews. He would have to agree, perhaps grudgingly, that a measure of merit rested, pragmatically speaking, in Herod's pro-Roman policy; and if the leaders of the people had learned to exploit it to the advantage of the people as a whole, they might have prevented the terrible decades of unrest that pervaded the last seventy years of national existence. In summary, if the historian weighs objectively all the factors involved, and without accepting at face value the condemnation by Herod's contemporaries—who lived too close to Herod's misdeeds and weaknesses to be impartial—he could possibly regard Herod as one of the courageous political reformers of Jewish antiquity. What he left after him could have been exploited to better advantage had his heirs—his inferiors by far—learned how to "break the vessel but save the good wine" and had the Pharisee rabbis who, but for a few, were totally absorbed in their inner world, known how to make better use of the positive achievements of the great monarch. They were content to blacken and minimize his image, and their sayings established the written record, marring it in two respects: they overlooked the positive elements and immortalized mainly the story of despotism and atrocities, bestowing on him for posterity the epithets of "Herod the cruel" and "Idumaean slave." A modern historian must, nevertheless, learn to regard Herod through the perspective of a "king of Israel," perhaps one of the greatest.

Herod family's tomb in Jerusalem—entrance to the family tomb. Herod was not buried in the family tomb, but was to be buried at Herodion



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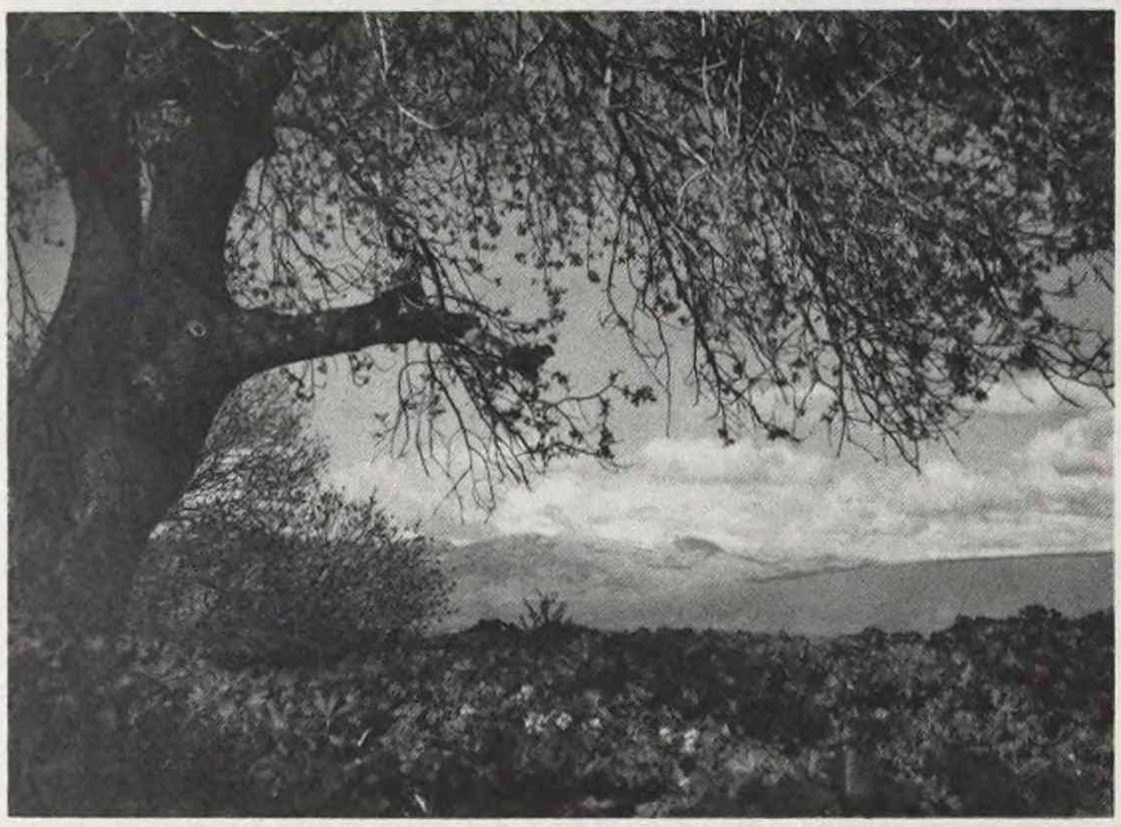


Judaea was thickly populated and prosperous at the end of Herod's reign:

1. *The Hermon range in the northeast*
2. *The Galilean skyline*
3. *Mount Hermon in the North*
4. *Shepherd and his flock in an olive-grove*
5. *Watered woods and meadows in the Plain of Esdraelon*
6. *A pottery kiln before the burning*

The other aspects of Herodian civilization are shown in Book V

2

3

BOOK II

A. THE RISE AND FALL OF ARCHELAUS

Chapter I

1. Archelaus' promises

(1) When Archelaus was about to undertake a journey to Rome, fresh disturbances broke out. He had spent the seven days' mourning for his father and provided the usual funeral feast for the public on a lavish scale—a Jewish custom that causes the ruin of many people, for they are obliged to feed the people to escape charge of impiety. He changed into white garments [*a*] and proceeded to the Temple, where the people received him with cheers and applause. (2) He greeted the people from a golden throne on a raised platform, thanking them for the good will they had shown at his father's funeral and the marks of homage they had already shown to himself, as if he were already established as king. However, for the present he would forgo royal power or even the title until his accession was confirmed by Caesar, to whose ruling everything had been submitted under the terms of Herod's will. (3) He reminded them that even at Jericho, when the army had tried to set the crown on his head, he had refused it. Nevertheless, he would render full payment to soldiers and people alike for their enthusiastic loyalty as soon as the supreme authorities had declared him king; and he would try in every way to treat them better than they had been dealt with by his father.

2. Resentment and seditions

(4) Delighted by these promises, the assembled people at once tested his sincerity by making large demands. Some clamored for a lightening of direct taxation, others wanted the sales tax abolished [*a*], and some demanded the liberation of prisoners. He readily assented to every demand in his anxiety to ingratiate himself with the people. Then, after offering sacrifices he sat down to a banquet with his friends. (5) But towards evening, a large number of men with revolutionary ideas gathered on the same spot. Since the public mourning for the king was now over they gave vent to their grief over the men punished by Herod, because they had torn down the golden eagle from the Temple gate [*b*]. (6) The lamentations were not in subdued tones, but in piercing wails, weeping in chorus, with beatings of the breast that resounded throughout the city, as they were for men who, they

1[*a*] *White garments* It was customary to enter the temple in white garments for this was regarded as indicating modesty and piety.

4[*a*] "The taxes that had been levied upon public purchases and sales had been ruthlessly exacted" (*Antiq.* XVII, 205; *War* I, 524[*c*] on taxation).

5[*b*] The story of the Zealots who removed the golden eagle is related above: *War* I, 648–653.

7[*c*] *Opposition to the arbitrary appointment of high priests* Joezer, son of Boethus, the brother of Herod's wife Mariamme II, who had served as high priest from 23 to 5 BC, was deposed by Archelaus, who appointed his brother Eleazar in his stead. Other renderings of the manner in which Archelaus chose his appointees are: "to choose a man more fitting to the Law and also more pure as high priest" and "...not from the House of the Hasmoneans did he appoint high priests, but he gave the honor to undistinguished men who were only descended from the priests," that is from ordinary priests and not to distinguished families that the people and the Sages approved of. Early Talmudic (Tannaitic) references express similar widely held views among the Pharisaic sages and the common people of these generations. This feeling was also shared by the Zealots. Both they and the Pharisees felt that Archelaus had deprived the high priesthood of its glory and value by alternately appointing and removing the high priests, in contradiction to the earlier tradition, which regarded the high priesthood as a life-long office. It was also regarded as a single element within the overall authority vested in the Sanhedrin, which legislated over broad issues of Jewish life though not as an institution that could supersede the Sanhedrin. As stated previously, Herod and now Archelaus clashed with the democratic order that the Pharisees sought at all times to protect.

10[*a*] *Ceremonies* The Passover pilgrimage and celebrations brought tremendous crowds from every part of the country and the whole Diaspora, ranging all the way from Italy, Greece, North Africa, the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, Asia Minor, and Syria to Mesopotamia (Babylon, Media and Persia). They crowded the city and camped all around it. Then they gathered in the Temple courts and close to the altar for the paschal sacrifices on the eve of Passover, and for the celebration of the barley harvest, expressed by presentation of the *Omer*, the first sheaf reaped during the harvest on the second day of the Passover. The paschal lambs destined for the Passover sacrifice were immolated near the great altar but were then returned to their owners to be roasted and eaten on the first night outside the Temple in "any pure place," meaning within the environs of Jerusalem. As tens of thousands partook of the Passover rite, the occasion turned into a mass celebration in the Holy City (Leviticus 23; 5–14).

12[*b*] *The plain* As the city overflowed with myriads of pilgrims, many of them were compelled to camp outside the city walls (10[*a*]). This is where the cavalry overtook them and scared them into dispersing and returning home.

13[*c*] *Abandoning the festival* Thus, from the very outset, Archelaus lost the goodwill of the people who held him responsible for an act of cruelty, the like of which even Herod never inflicted on them since the capture of Jerusalem from Antigonus (*War* I, 352).

said, had perished by fire for the sake of the law of their fathers and for the Temple. (7) To avenge them, they clamored for the punishment of Herod's followers and above all for the deposition of the man he had appointed high priest [*c*], as it was their duty to select a man of greater piety and purer hands.

3. Archelaus' repression of the celebrants of the Passover

(8) Archelaus, infuriated, but anxious to begin his journey, deferred retaliation, fearing to provoke a general uprising, which would delay his departure. Accordingly, he tried to appease the rebels by persuasion rather than by resorting to force and sent his general secretly to ask them to desist. (9) The officer entered the area of the sanctuary, but before he could utter a word the rioters drove him off with stones; and they did the same to many others whom Archelaus sent after him to call them to reason. To overt appeal they responded in anger, and it was evident that if many supporters would join them, there would be no holding them. (10) And now it was time for the feast of unleavened bread, called Passover by the Jews, which is celebrated with a great number of sacrifices; there was a huge influx from the country for the ceremonies [*a*]. Those who were mourning the dead rabbis massed in the Temple courts and so provided ample fuel for the sedition. (11) This alarmed Archelaus, who, to prevent the contagion from infecting the whole population, sent a tribune commanding a cohort to restrain by force the leaders of the sedition. Their approach infuriated the mob, who pelted them with stones and killed most of the men, wounding the tribune, who barely escaped with his life. (12) Then, as if nothing serious had occurred, they returned to their sacrifices. Archelaus realized that the mob could no longer be restrained without bloodshed; so he sent his whole army against them, the infantry in close formation through the city, and cavalry through the plain [*b*]. (13) Suddenly the soldiers assaulted those who were busy with their sacrifices, killing about three thousand, dispersing the remainder among the neighboring hills. Archelaus' heralds followed and ordered everyone to return home. They went home, abandoning the festival [*c*].

A priest blows the shofar *(ram's horn) preparatory to the slaughtering of a young bull*

14[a] *Malthace,* a Samaritan. Samaria had been pro-Herodian from the early days of the dynasty.

14[b] Herod's veteran advisers: *Poplas,* called Pitollas in *Antiq.* XVII, 219; *Ptolemy,* his close friend and confidant; *War* I, 473, 667; *Nicolaus* of Damascus, another close confidant and companion who appeared as public prosecutor in Antipater's trial (*War* I, 637). They went down to the coast to board ship.

14[c] *Philip* Archelaus' brother was probably left in charge of the realm as well as the palace and royal property.

15[d] *Salome* Herod's redoubtable sister.

16[a] *Sabinus,* the procurator of finances for Syria, had to report to the emperor concerning the state of the property Herod had left and the annual income from the various regions of the kingdom. As stated, Herod possessed vast estates, which represented an important share of his tremendous wealth. Sabinus' mission was a preliminary step, pending the emperor's approval of Herod's political and financial will. However, as the tale unfolds, it becomes evident that Sabinus had ulterior motives and abused his powers. The repercussions are related below (45–46).

16[b] *Quintilius Varus* was the legate or governor of Syria and had presided at Antipater's trial (*War* I, 617). His seat was at Antioch.

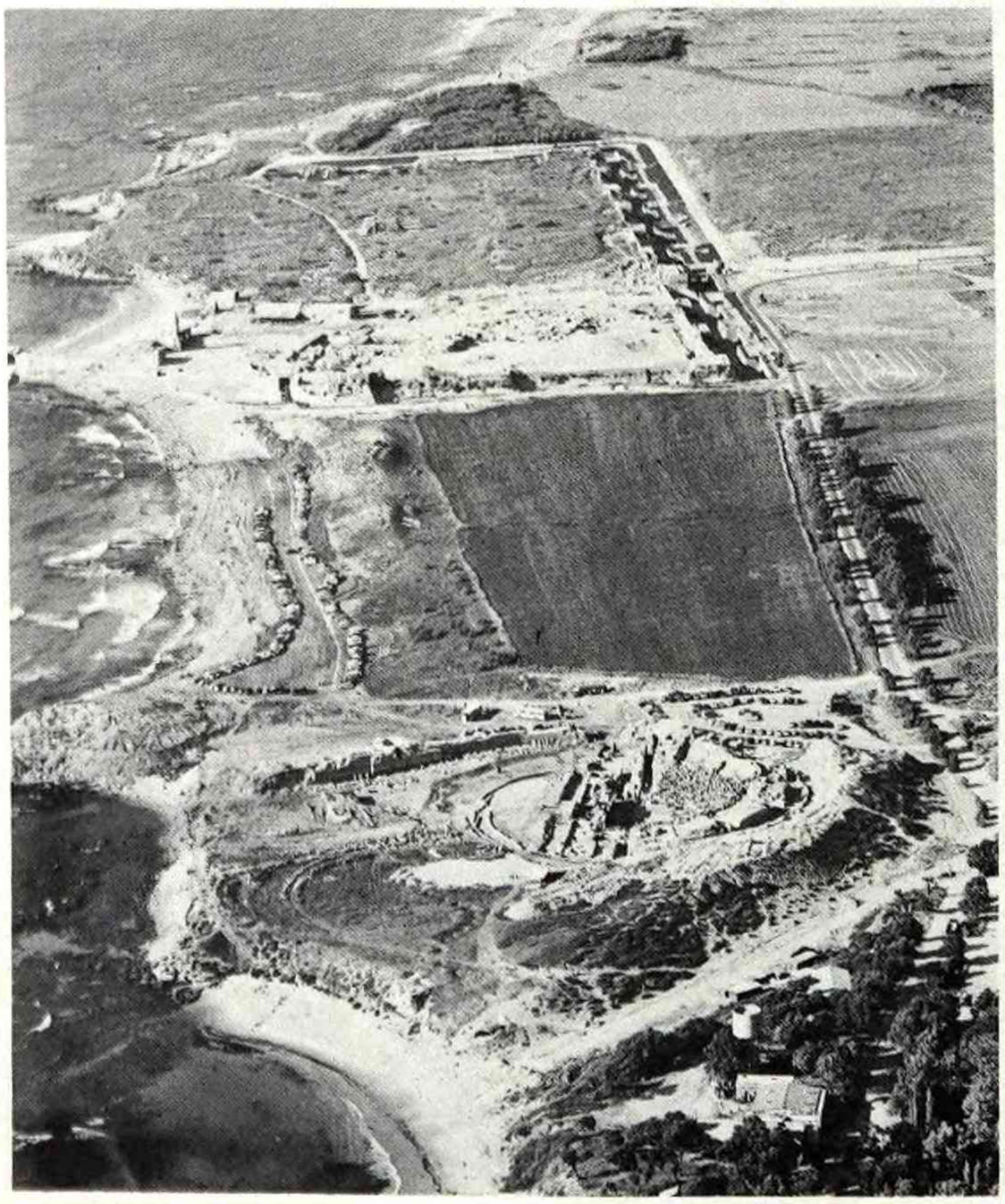
16[c] *Ptolemy* (cf. 14[b]). He and the other veteran advisers of Herod were intent on protecting dynastic Herodian interests against Sabinus' designs while the situation was still fluid.

18[d] The palace referred to was Herod's sumptuous complex, partly identified today by remains in the enclosure south of the present Jerusalem Citadel. It was the official residence of the Roman procurators when they came to Jerusalem (and, incidentally, the site of the *praetorium* where Pontius Pilate judged Jesus of Nazareth).

20[a] *The codicil* in Herod's will (*War* I, 668) that altered the penultimate testament. Antipas wished Augustus to recognize the penultimate will, which named him as the primary heir. In Rome he was joined by the majority of Herod's relatives who objected to Archelaus. The most outstanding was Antipater, Salome's son (26[a]).

21[b] *Mother,* namely Malthace, the Samaritan who sailed with him to Rome. Josephus refers in a subsequent section (*War* II, 80) to an independent Jewish delegation of fifty persons who arrived simultaneously with Herod's sons, their relatives and companions. Hence the events at this stage and in 80 which refer to the same situation.

Aerial view of Caesarea showing the inner harbor at top left, and the amphitheater below



Chapter II

1. Archelaus' departure for Rome

(14) Archelaus himself with his mother [*a*] and his friends, Poplas [*b*], Ptolemy [*b*], and Nicolaus [*b*], then went down to the coast, leaving Philip [*c*] in charge of the realm and caretaker of his private property. (15) Salome [*d*] with her children accompanied him, together with the nephews and sons-in-law of Herod, ostensibly to support the claims of Archelaus to the throne, but in reality to bring a charge against him for his lawless actions in the Temple.

2. Sabinus' mercenary designs

(16) At Caesarea, they were met by Sabinus [*a*], the procurator of Syria, who was on his way up to Judaea to take charge of Herod's estate, but was prevented from going farther by the arrival of Varus [*b*], whom Ptolemy [*c*], on Archelaus' behalf, had urgently asked to come. (17) So for the time being, Sabinus, in deference to Varus' wishes, postponed his intention to rush to the forts and exclude Archelaus from access to his father's treasuries. He promised to take no action until Caesar had reached a decision, and remained at Caesarea. (18) But as soon as restraint was removed by the return of Varus to Antioch and the departure of Archelaus for Rome, Sabinus set out promptly for Jerusalem where he took possession of the palace [*d*]. Then he summoned the governors of the forts and comptrollers of the treasury and tried to sort out the property account and take possession of the citadels. (19) However, the officers were loyal to Archelaus' injunctions and continued to guard their respective trusts, professing to guard everything for Caesar rather than Archelaus.

3. Antipas' rival claim to the throne

(20) Meanwhile Antipas, another claimant to the throne, had set out for Rome; he insisted that the will in which he had been named king had greater value than the codicil [*a*]. He had previous promises of support from Salome and from many of his relatives who had sailed with Archelaus. (21) He had tried also to win over his mother [*b*] and Nicolaus' brother Ptolemy, whose influence was thought to be decisive in view of the trust Herod had placed in him, for he had been the most honored of Herod's friends at court. But he put most confidence in the oratorical power of his advocate, Irenaeus. On the strength of this he disregarded those who advised him to give way to Archelaus considering his rights of seniority and the terms of the codicil. (22) In Rome, all the relatives who detested Archelaus tranferred their allegiance to Antipas. Their main objective was for autonomy supervised by a Roman governor, or, failing that, they preferred to accept Antipas as king.

4. (23) They were aided in this design by Sabinus [*a*] who sent letters denouncing Archelaus to Caesar and lavishing praise on Antipas. (24) Salome and her friends now drew up their indictment and lodged it with Caesar. Archelaus responded by sending Ptolemy [*b*] with a written official record of his rights and sending in his father's ring and papers [*c*]. (25) Caesar, having considered in private the allegations of both parties, the size of the kingdom, the value of the revenue, and also the number of Herod's children, read also the dispatches from Varus and Sabinus about the matter. He then summoned a council of leading Romans, giving a seat for the first time to Caius [*d*], the son of Agrippa and his daughter Julia, whom he had adopted and he invited each disputing party to present his case.

5. Antipater's accusation of Archelaus

(26) Antipater, Salome's son [*a*], the most eloquent among Archelaus' opponents, arose to accuse him. He argued that, though at the moment he was ostensibly laying claims for the throne, actually he had long since acted as king. He was now merely playing upon the patient ears of Caesar, whose decision on the succession he had not awaited. (27) As soon as Herod was dead, he had secretly bribed persons to crown him. He had sat in state on the throne and given audience as a king. He had effected alterations in the army and conferred promotions. (28) He had conceded to the people everything for which they had petitioned him as king and liberated those whom his father had imprisoned for the gravest crimes. Now he had come to ask his master for the shadow of royalty of which he had himself snatched the substance, thus allowing Caesar control not of realities but of mere titles! (29) Antipater also alleged that Archelaus' mourning for his father was a sham; that in the daytime he assumed an expression of grief and at night he had been indulging in drunken orgies. In this connection he added that the recent unrest was attributable to the people's indignation at this kind of behavior. (30) The speaker then directed the whole force of his argument to the multitude of Jews killed around the sanctuary, innocent people who had come for a festival and were themselves brutally murdered while offering their sacrifices [*b*]. There had been such a hugh pile of corpses in the Temple court such as even a foreign enemy, suddenly descending upon them, could hardly have raised. (31) It was, indeed, because he foresaw this vein of cruelty in his son that Herod had never given him the least hope of succession to the throne, until the day when his mind was even more stricken than his body and he was incapable of sound reasoning; when he hardly realized whose name he was inserting in the codicil as his successor, even though he had had no fault to find with the heir named in the will that he had drafted while his health was good and his mind quite unimpaired. (32) But, he continued,

23[*a*] Referring to reports from Sabinus and Varus about Herod's legacy, accompanied by comments in favor of Archelaus. The emperor was in no position to decide at once and he therefore brought all the parties before the *concilium principes*.

24[*b*] Cf. Ptolemy, 14[*b*].

24[*c*] These were records of state and other documents that the Roman officials were perhaps even better acquainted with than were many people in Judaea, whether the latter were friends or foes of Herod and Archelaus.

25[*d*] This Caius (not to be confused with the later emperor) was Augustus' grandson Gaius Caesar, who died in AD 4, the son of the Roman Marcus Agrippa, for whom Herod Agrippa was named (178).

26[*a*] This Antipater was Archelaus' cousin, not brother (*War* I, 566). Antipater's patent falsehood is illustrated by the parallel and more explicit account in *Antiq.* XVII, 230–240. Appearing before Caesar, he attributed the release of the prisoners at Jericho hippodrome to Archelaus (*War* I, 659–660) while this sould be credited to Salome, his mother. On the other hand, he condemned Archelaus for the slaughter of Jews at the Temple during the Passover festival (*War* II, 12–13). In other words, Archelaus was presumed to stand accused according to his detractors — both on account of his good and evil deeds. Nicolaus' reaction, while he sat in judgment, was that the other sons of Herod were no better than Archelaus!

30[*b*] *Their sacrifices* A similar occurrence is referred to in Luke 13, 1: "There were some present at that very time who told him (Jesus) of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifice." There is no reason to connect this massacre with any of the episodes known to us from reliable historians like Josephus and Philo. However there were many conflicts in Archelaus' time and they frequently occurred during major festivals, such as Passover, Pentecost (Shavuoth) and Tabernacles (Succoth) since they provided a suitable opportunity for Zealot and messianic agitation. Pilate's career is related below (*War* II, 169–177).

Statue of Augustus as commander of the Roman army, wearing cruirass

35[*a*] Nicolaus implied that Herod's other sons were no better or worse than Antipas.

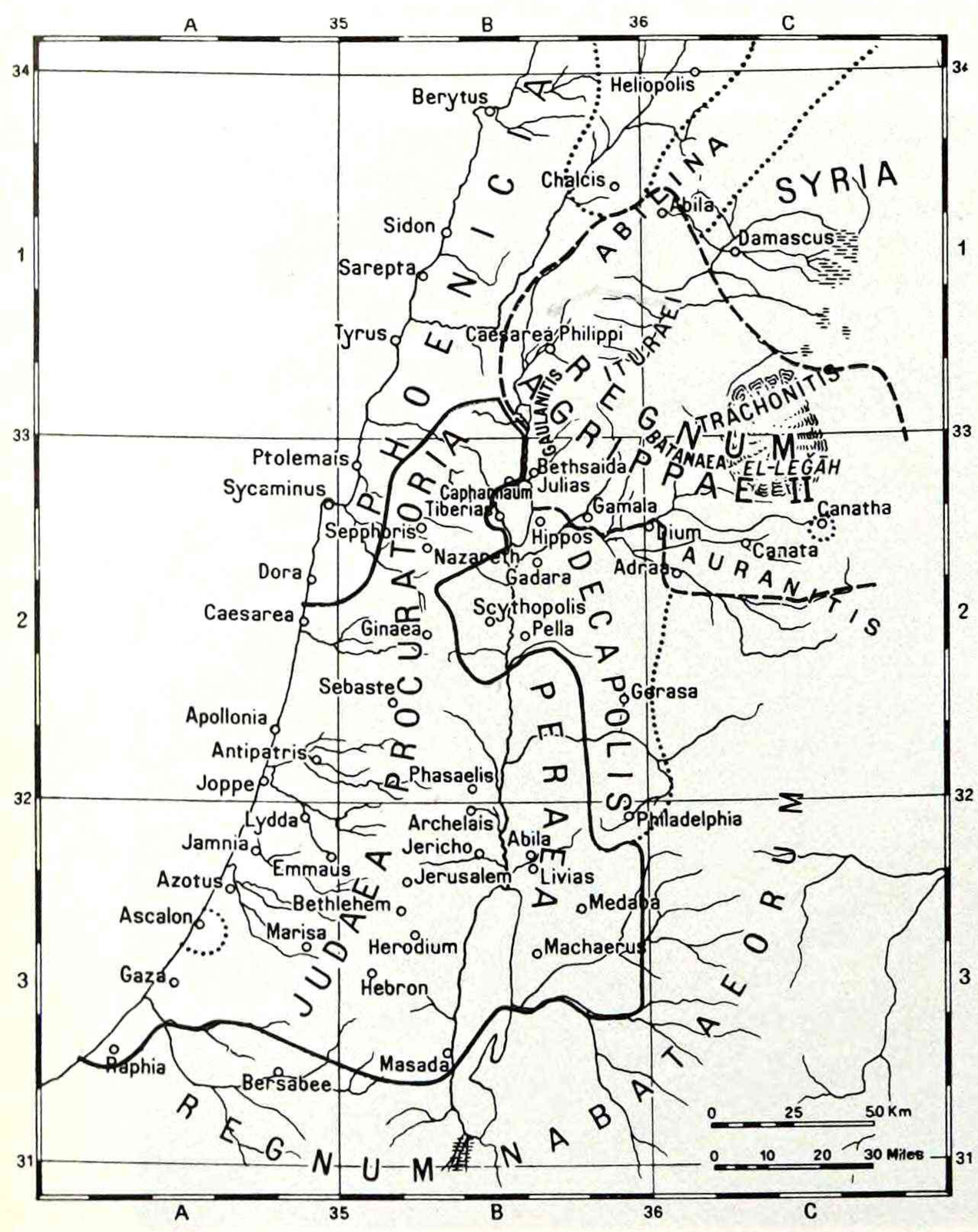
36[*b*] Nicolaus' bias toward Herod emerges at this point and it is known that Josephus relied mainly on Nicolaus' *Historiae* (cf. 111[*b*]). Nevertheless, the rest of his account left Archelaus with no leg to stand on at the trial.

37[*a*] Augustus was now inclined to whittle down the kingdom of Herod since he entertained no further illusions of maintaining Judaea as a really effective client-kingdom, such as it had been in Herod's heyday. But in the meantime he wanted to give the appearance of upholding Herod's will.

39[*a*] Pronounced Maltaki.

41[*b*] *Sedition. The Roman governors and Jewish grounds of discontent* Josephus' sources as in par. 17 and here rely on Nicolaus as a witness of the events, who seemed to sympathize with Varus, the legate of Syria, and put the blame squarely on Sabinus, the Roman procurator of Syria. However, the immediate cause of frustration appeared to be the failure of the Jewish delegation at Rome (cf. 80[*a*]) that went at the same time as the Herodian contenders. This provoked new and serious outbreaks. On the other hand, Varus' character, as described in Latin and other sources, played its part in the overall drama. Velleius Paterculus stresses the fact that Varus "came as a poor man to the rich province of Syria and left it a poor province as a rich man." And Sabinus, for his part, tried to get rich quickly through his shuffling and rough policy. On the whole, the enmity of the people in Judaea at the turn of the first century AD was intensified by the hardships entailed as a result of the stoppage of the great public works that King Herod had undertaken in Jerusalem and other parts of the country. This resulted in the presence of a Roman legion in Jerusalem for a long interval.

Judaea (Palestine) under the rule of the first procurators (AD 6–41)



even if anyone would be inclined to attach more weight to the decision of a man whose health failed him, the answer was that Archelaus had deposed himself from the throne by his outrages. What would he be like after being invested with authority from Caesar, when he had massacred such multitudes before receiving it?

6. (33) After continuing in this vein at length, and bringing forward most of the relatives to witness the truth of each accusation, Antipater concluded his speech.

Nicolaus' defense of Archelaus

(34) Nicolaus then rose to defend Archelaus. He maintained that the slaughter in the Temple had been unavoidable, because those killed had been enemies not only of the crown but also of Caesar, the arbiter of the kingdom. (35) As for the other charges made against Archelaus, he argued that the measures had been taken on the advice of the accusers themselves [*a*]. As for the later codicil, he claimed that it was valid for this reason especially, that in it Caesar was appointed executor. (36) A man sane enough to cede his authority into the hands of the ruler of the world was not likely to choose the wrong man for his heir. The discernment shown in choosing the donor was a guarantee of his sanity in the choice of the appointee [*b*].

7. Augustus' deliberation over the succession

(37) When Nicolaus, too, had fully stated his case, Archelaus came forward and fell down in silence at Caesar's knees. The emperor very graciously raised him up, intimating that he considered him worthy to succeed his father, but made no definite announcement [*a*]. (38) After dismissing his advisory council, he pondered that day in private over what he had been told, considering whether to appoint one of those named in the wills, or to divide the power among the whole family; for it seemed necessary to provide support for its numerous interested members.

Chapter III

1. A large-scale revolt in Judaea

(39) Before Caesar could reach a decision, Archelaus' mother, Malthace [*a*], fell ill and died. At the same time, dispatches arrived from Varus in Syria about a revolt of the Jews. (40) He had seen it coming, and thus when Archelaus had sailed he had gone up to Jerusalem to restrain the prime movers. As it was obvious that the people would not remain quiet, he had left in the city one of the three legions he had brought from Syria; he himself had then returned to Antioch. (41) However, it was the arrival of Sabinus that gave the people an occasion for sedition [*b*]. He tried to

compel the garrison to hand over the forts and effected a thorough search for the king's treasures, employing not only the soldiers left by Varus but a gang of his own slaves, arming them all and using them as instruments of his avarice.

The eve of the "revolt of Varus"

(42) On the eve of Pentecost [*c*]—thus the Jews call a feast that takes place seven weeks after Passover and derives its name from the number of intervening days—the people assembled, not so much to conduct the usual rites as to vent their wrath. (43) A countless multitude gathered from Galilee and Idumaea, from Jericho and Peraea, east of Jordan; but they could not equal in number and enthusiasm the native population from Judaea itself. (44) The whole mass split into three divisions that established themselves in three camps; one to the north of the Temple, one to the south of the hippodrome [*d*], and the third near the palace to the west. Thus they surrounded the Romans and held them under siege [*e*].

2. The carnage on the Temple esplanade

(45) Their numbers and determination terrified Sabinus, who sent a stream of messengers to Varus to request immediate support, warning him that if he delayed, the legion would be cut to pieces. (46) He himself went up to the highest tower of the fortress—called Phasael [*a*], after Herod's brother who was slain by the Parthians [*b*]. From there he signalled to the legionaries to attack the enemy, for he was so

42[*c*] Pentecost, or Shavuoth in Hebrew, celebrated fifty days after Passover, is the last of the three festivals bringing pilgrims to Jerusalem. It is observed on Sivan 6th on the occasion of the wheat harvest. On this festival, two loaves of bread were presented to the priests and an offering of first fruits *(bikkurim)* was made (Leviticus 23, 15–22).

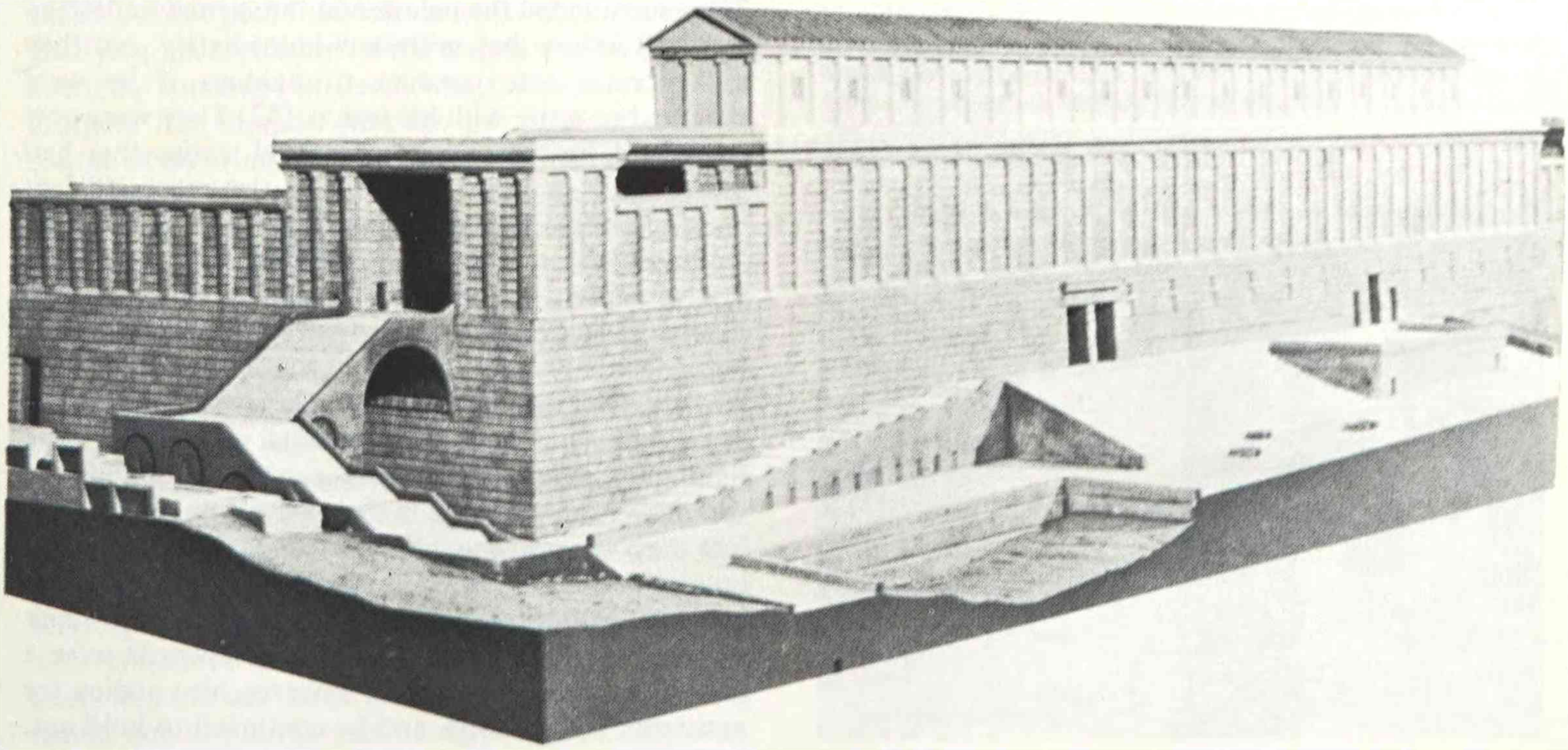
44[*d*] The location of the hippodrome has not been found (cf. *Antiq.* XVII, 255).

44[*e*] The Romans took refuge in the stronghold of Jerusalem, the present Citadel, formerly erected by Herod north of his palace (c. 35 BC: *War* I, 418). It was flanked by three towers that formed a strategic triangle, of which the Phasael Tower (cf. 46) and the Hippicus faced the Temple Mount and overlooked the roofs of the city.

46[*a*] *The Phasael Tower* is one of the two ancient towers that faced Herodian Jerusalem (present Old City) from the west. The other tower is the Hippicus. The Phasael tower is most often identified with the lower portion of a square, solid structure commonly called "David's Tower," in the northeast of the Citadel. This identification is based on the dimensions given by Josephus in his description of the Phasael tower, which closely correspond with the measurements of this structure (*War* V, 166–169). The upper part of "David's Tower" is a later addition. The height of the ancient base is 19.85 m., built in two parts, each one of eight courses. The upper part is 17.12 m. wide and 21.40 long, and the lower part is slightly larger 18.30 × 22.60 m. This solid structure is outstanding in the quality of its typical Herodian masonry, as illustrated. The Phasael tower enjoyed a clear view over the Temple esplanade where the fighting was taking place.

46[*b*] Cf. *War* I, 271–273; 418.

The three-storied southern Royal Portico or Stoa, *known as the Ḥanuyot, towered over the breadth of the southern wall of the Temple Mount. This was also the site of the clash between Jesus and his disciples with the moneychangers and high-priestly hierarchy as reported in the Gospel of John. See 48*[*c*]

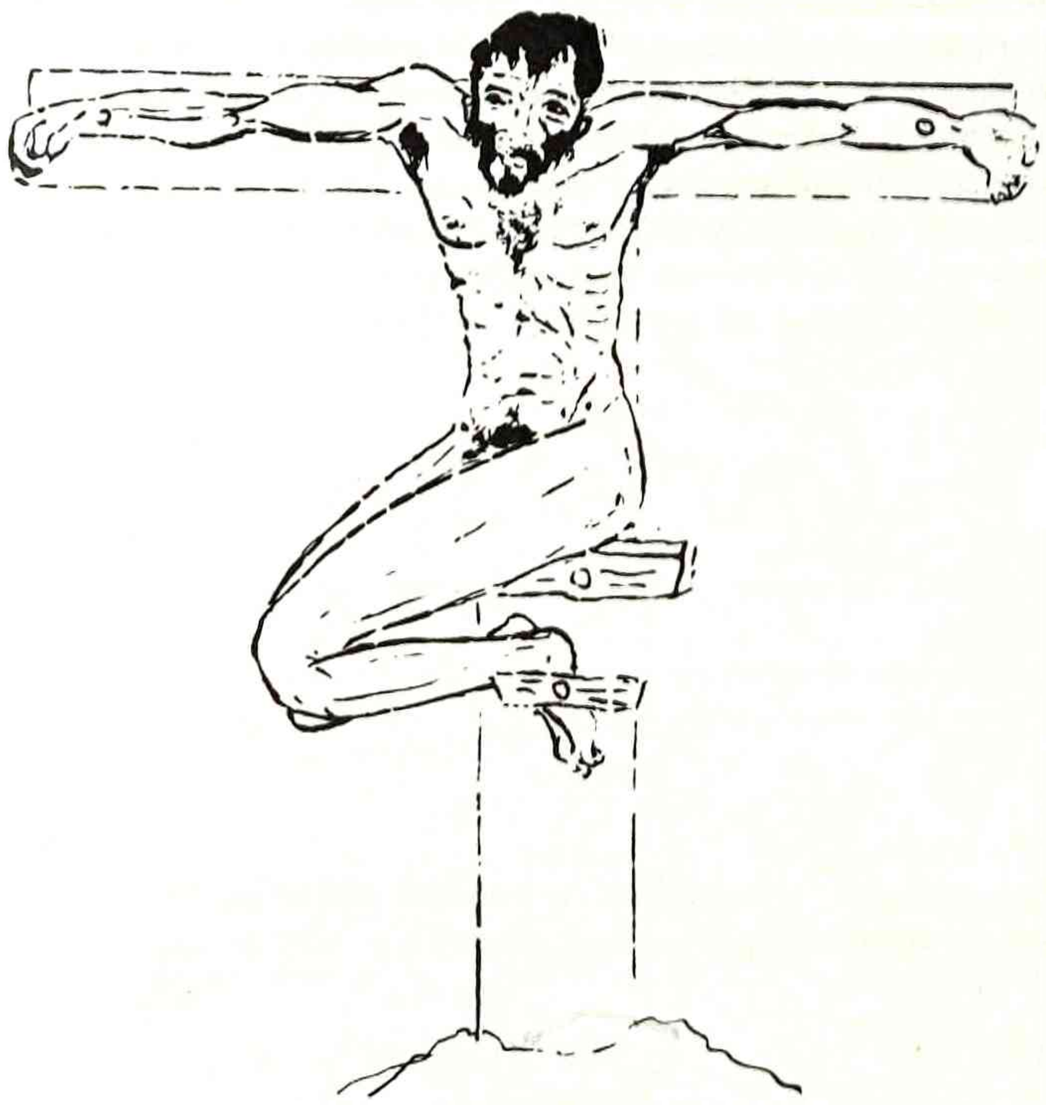


48[*c*] *The colonnaded porticoes* that bordered the vast Temple-Mount esplandade on three sides were one story high, but the southern portico (Royal Stoa) rose two stories above the level of the esplanade and formed a good position for shooting arrows and spears (*see* diagram and reconstruction). The roof of the portico contained woodwork, pitch and wax and was therefore highly flammable.

49[*a*] The southern outer wall under the Royal Stoa descended precipitously from this great height. Below was the wide flight of stairs that led to the southern gates.

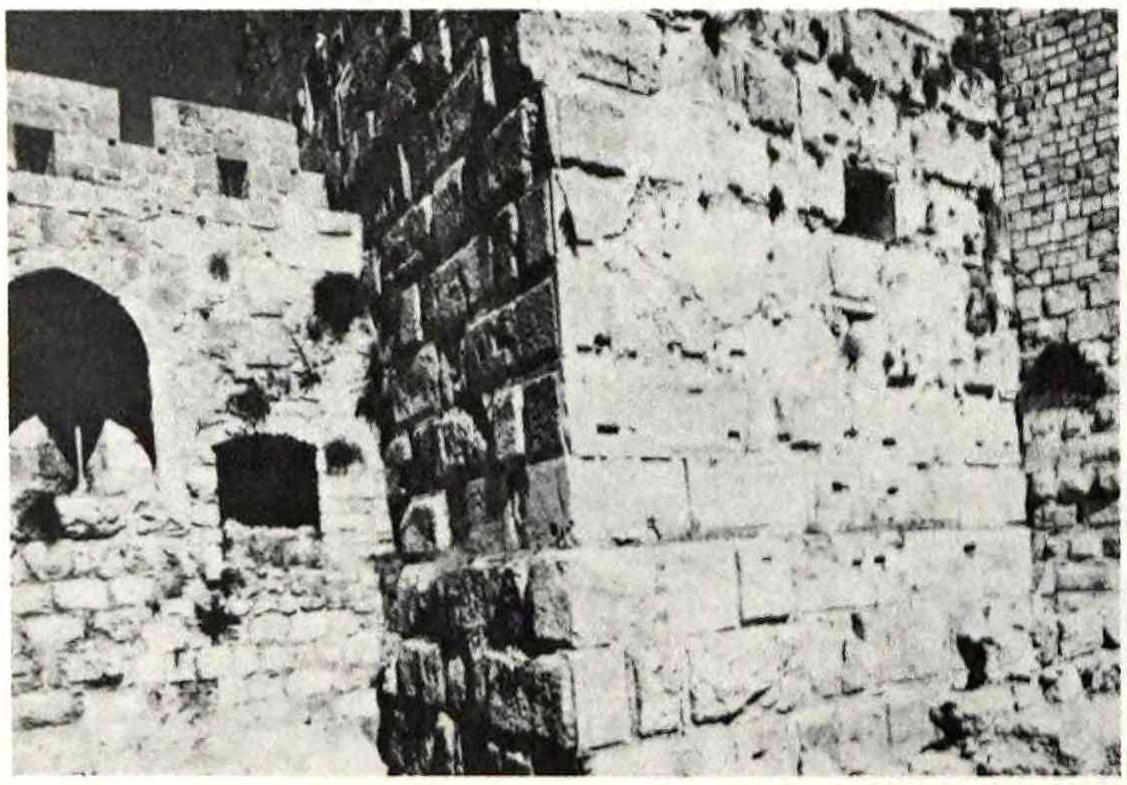
50[*b*] According to *Antiq.* XVII, 264, Sabinus' 400 talents were only a part of the booty, apart from what was stolen by the legionaries. It is known that the Temple treasury, a national institution fed both by local taxation and generous donations from the Diaspora, held far greater sums. The writer of *Antiq.* XVII is clearly following another passage culled from *Thucydides* VII, 85.

52[*a*] The cohorts drafted in the region of Sebaste (Samaria, an area loyal to Herod). Cohorts of *Sebasteni* are mentioned in Roman inscriptions commemorating military achievements; see also pars. 58, 63, 74, 236, cf. 74[*b*].



Restoration of the position in which an unknown first-century Jew—with his legs adjacent—was crucified. This was determined from the skeletal remains found in his tomb in the northern necropolis of ancient Jerusalem.

The ancient base of the Phasael tower as described in 46[a]



panic-stricken that he did not dare to go down to his own men. (47) Acting as they were instructed, the soldiers dashed into the Temple-area and engaged in a fierce combat with the Jews in which, as long as no one shot at them from above, their experience in combat gave them the advantage over the novices exposed to them. (48) However, when many of the Jews climbed onto the top of porticoes [*c*], and poured their missiles down upon their heads, many fell. Indeed, the Romans found it difficult both to defend themselves against those attacking from above, and to resist those who fought them hand to hand.

3. The porticoes burned and the treasury pillaged

(49) Hard-pressed from both directions, the legionaries set fire to the porticoes, works remarkable for their massive size and magnificence. On top, the Jews were suddenly enveloped and perished in the flames; many others jumped amidst the enemy and were destroyed by them; some flung themselves over the precipitous wall behind them [*a*], others, in despair, fell on their swords to avoid being consumed by the flames; (50) a number, who crept down from the walls and dashed at the Romans, were easily overpowered in their confused state. Then, as part of the enemy had been killed and the survivors dispersed in terror, the soldiers fell upon the unguarded treasury of God and carried off about four hundred talents; that which they did not steal of this sum Sabinus collected [*b*].

4. Besieging Sabinus in the palace

(51) The effect on the Jews of this loss of life and buildings was to cause them to band together a far larger and more effective force against the Romans. They surrounded the palace and threatened to destroy them all unless they withdrew immediately, but they did promise safe conduct to Sabinus if he were prepared to retire with his legion. (52) They were now reinforced by the bulk of the royal troops that had deserted to their side. However, the most efficient division—three thousand men from Sebaste [*a*] under Rufus and Gratus, the latter commanding the royal infantry, Rufus, the cavalry—remained loyal to the Romans; each of them, even without the men under him, could turn the scales in war considering their bravery and intelligence. (53) The Jews pressed the siege, making assaults on the citadel, while at the same time they called upon Sabinus and his soldiers to withdraw and not stand in their way, now that at long last they were on the way to recover their traditional independence. (54) Sabinus would have been only too glad to withdraw quietly, but he distrusted their promises and suspected that their soft words were a bait to ensnare him; he was, however, also hoping for assistance from Varus, and he continued to hold out.

Chapter IV

1. Anarchy and revolt throughout Judaea

(55) Meanwhile, in the country districts also, there were widespread disturbances, and many tried to grasp the opportunity to seize power [*a*]. In Idumaea [*b*] two thousand of Herod's veterans reassembled with their arms and proceeded to fight the royal troops. They were opposed by Achiab [*c*] a cousin of the king; he would not risk a battle in the open and fell back on the strongest fortified positions. (56) At Sepphoris in Galilee, Judas, son of Hezekiah [*d*], the brigand chief [*e*] who once overran the country and was subdued by King Herod, collected a considerable force, broke into the royal arsenals, equipped his followers, and attacked the other power-seekers.

2. Simon's usurpation of power

(57) In Peraea [*a*] Simon, one of the royal slaves, putting his trust in his good looks and stature, crowned himself with the diadem. He roamed the country with a band of brigands and burned down the royal palace at Jericho and many other stately mansions, securing easy plunder for himself out of the flames. (58) Indeed, he would have reduced every rich house to ashes had not Gratus, commander of the royal infantry, taken the archers from Trachonitis [*b*] and the best troops of Sebastenians and gone to meet the man. (59) Great numbers of Peraeans fell in the ensuing engagement. Simon himself fled up a ravine but was cut off by Gratus, who struck the fugitive a blow on the neck and broke it. Likewise the palace at Betharamatha [*c*] near the Jordan was burned down by another body of Peraean insurgents.

3. Athrongaeus the shepherd crowned by himself

(60) Another claimant to the throne was a shepherd called Athrongaeus [*a*] whose sole recommendation justifying his aspiration to the crown was his physical strength, contempt of death and the support of four brothers like himself. (61) He put each of these in charge of an armed band, employing them as generals and satraps [*b*] on his raids, while he reserved to himself, as king, the settlement of major problems. (62) Having now crowned himself with the diadem, he continued for a considerable time to raid the country with his brothers. Their principal purpose was to kill Romans and royal troops [*c*], but not even a Jew could escape if he fell into their hands with anything valuable on him. (63) Once they ventured to surround an entire Roman company [*d*] near Emmaus [*e*] as it was conveying grain and weapons to the legion. Their centurion Arius and forty of his best men were shot down by their arrows [*f*], the rest were in danger of meeting the same fate but were rescued by the intervention of Gratus with the Sebastenians. (64) Such was the treatment that throughout the war they meted out to natives and foreigners alike. But even-

55[*a*] *Nationalist and messianic aspirations* In his histories, Josephus takes the view that Jewish resistance to the Herodians and to Rome was secularly motivated and was in no particular sense grounded in mystic religious feeling. Nevertheless, such motivation was stressed most particularly by the Pharisees and even more pointedly by the early Zealots such as Judas the Galilean, son of the rebel Zealot Hezekiahs, and their later followers, as we shall see. This evidence bears out the incompleteness of Josephus' interpretation on this point. Consequently, when he speaks of many insurgents who "aspired to sovereignty," we must not overlook the old eschatological roots of their aspirations for the restoration of the ideal "Jewish ruler descended from the house of David." Nor must we ignore the ever-resurgent and associated messianic aspirations that inspired and fired many of the leaders of the insurgents in Judaea. In short, the uprisings at this time were much too widespread and violent to be explained away as the spontaneous and secular opposition of the people.

55[*b*] Idumaea covered the southern part of Judaea and was populated by Jews and Idumaeans.

55[*c*] *Achiab* had saved Herod during his illness; *War* I, 662.

56[*d*] The story of Hezekiah is told in *War* I, 204.

56[*e*] *Rise of a revolutionary Galilean family* The rising of Judas the Galilean is related below (*War* II, 118). He was the founder of the Zealot movement whose growth is the burden of the rest of the present history. The end of Herod's reign marked a turning point in the social and political development of the Jewish community. In addition to the ascendancy of the new aristocratic and landed gentry who owed allegiance to Herod's successors and to Rome, with whom they wished to coexist without disturbance, the basis was also laid for an anti-Herodian opposition with this aggressive Galilean family at its head. Both these developments were to have far-reaching consequences, but Josephus' definition of these activists as mere "seekers of power" fails to convey their true historical significance. However, in terms of what the Jews regarded as their ideal and traditional form of Jewish rule, their strongest yearnings were for the reinstatement of the ancient theocracy ruled by a high priest. He should be of venerable lineage, and not one selected by Herod and his heirs or by the Roman procurators. This may help to explain some of the trends which are recorded in the next pages.

57[*a*] *Peraea* formed the Jewish part of Transjordan, namely, ancient Gilead. Josephus treats Simon, the rebel chief, with scant respect (compare 56[*e*]).

58[*b*] *Trachonitis* lay northeast of Transjordan and was populated by a mixed Jewish and gentile rural population.

59[*c*] *Betharamatha* (Beit Ramatha in Hebrew) was an ancient town in Peraea. It was rebuilt by Antipas and named Julias (*Antiq.* XVIII, 27).

60[*a*] Pronounced Atrongayus. Though Josephus does not regard him as a true patriot, the outline of his military organization and civil administration (*Antiq.* XVII, 278–284) suggests a more solid insurgent system that stood firm for a few years, until Archelaus crushed it.

61[*b*] The *satraps* mentioned in this administration were a relic of Persian tradition and meant provincial governors.

62[*c*] *Royal troops*, meaning Herodian followers.

63[*d*] A company of 100 or *centuria*.

63[*e*] *Emmaus (Hammath)*, formerly Nicopolis, was situated southeast of Lydda at the foot of the Judaean hills; modern Amwas. The company in question had gone up from Emmaus, via Beth-Horon, to supply food to the legion in Jerusalem.

64[*f*] The fate of the fifth brother is not known: 60.

65[*g*] *Why did the revolts fail?* It is clear that the revolts had no concerted plan or unified leadership whose guidance was accepted by all insurgents (a chronic situation that was to recur between AD 66 and 70). They were spontaneous uprisings of a regional nature, independent of each other, with each center of revolt possessing its own leader. When Simon burned down the palace in Jericho, he did not have the support of the insurgents of Ammatus, even though he himself came from Transjordan. The rebels and their leaders came primarily from the lower classes and were moved by economic conditions no less than by messianic yearnings. Simon was a former slave; Athrongaeus a shepherd. The various leaders adopted royal titles largely because of the tension caused by current eschatological aspirations which encouraged the emergence of leaders with messianic pretensions, as noted in 55[*a*].

67[*a*] Regiments of auxiliary cavalry or *alae*, usually consisting of 500 horses (as distinct from the smaller legionary squadrons of cavalry; *War* III, 120).

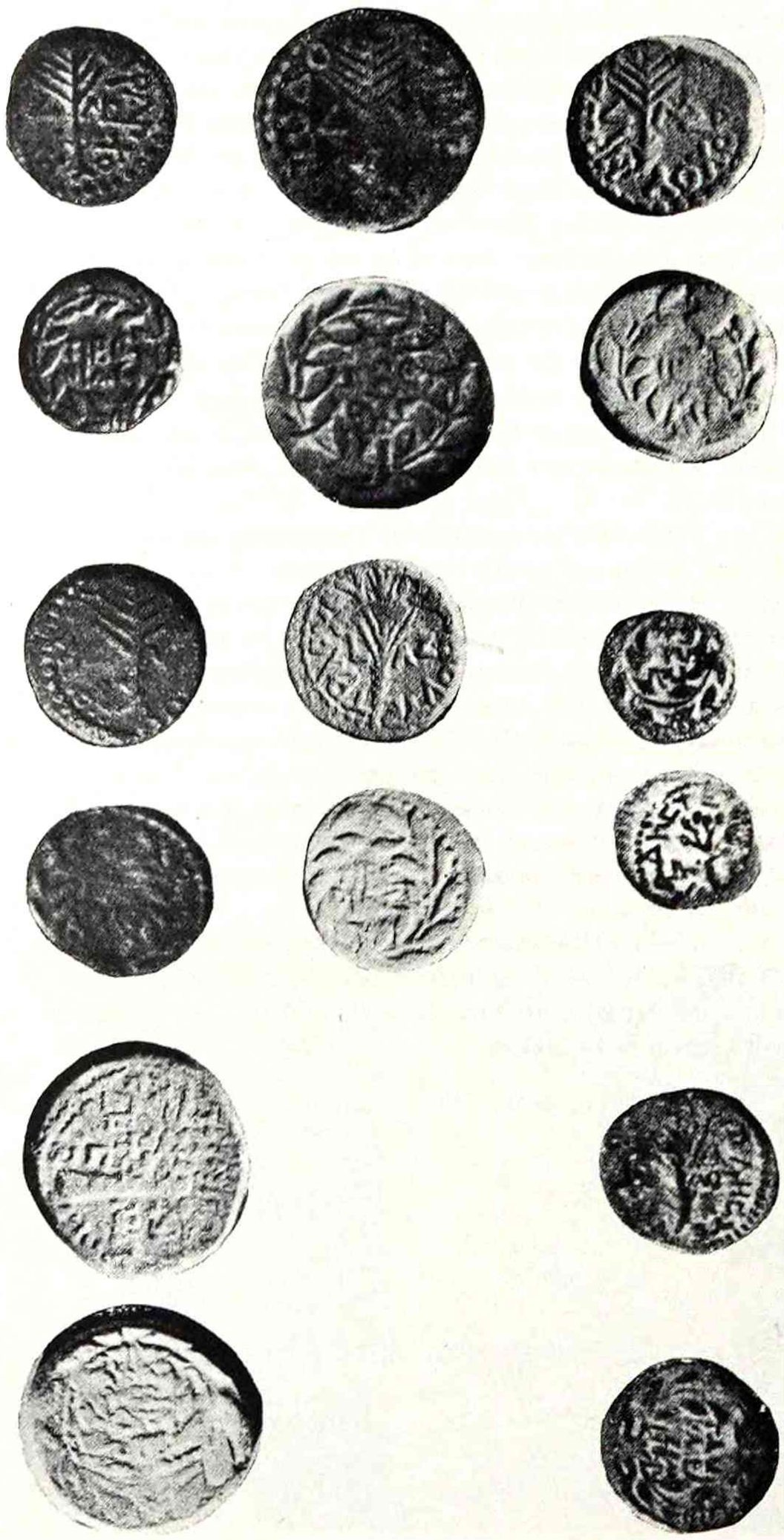
67[*b*] *Berytus*, modern Beirut in Lebanon.

68[*c*] *Arab*, meaning Nabataean.

69[*d*] *Arous*, locality unknown. Ptolemy was a friend both of Herod and Archaelaus (*War* I, 473, 667; II, 14–16; 24; 64).

70[*e*] *Sappho;* locality unknown.

Coins of Herod Philip II



tually three of them were defeated. The eldest by Archelaus; the next two in an encounter with Gratus and Ptolemy; and the fourth submitted to Archelaus on terms [*f*]. (65) It was at a later date that their careers came to an end, but at that time they were harassing the whole of Judaea with guerilla warfare [*g*].

Chapter V

1. The arrival of Varus' army to help Sabinus

(66) When Varus received the dispatches from Sabinus and his officers, he was alarmed for the whole legion and hurried to the rescue. (67) He mobilized the two remaining legions with the four regiments of horses attached to them [*a*] and marched to Ptolemais, giving instructions that the auxiliaries provided by kings and local chieftains should meet him there. On his way through Berytus [*b*] his army was increased by 1,500 armed infantry recruits from that city. (68) At Ptolemais he was joined by the troops of allies; among these was Aretas the Arab [*c*] who, because of his hatred of Herod, brought a considerable force of infantry and cavalry.

Campaigning in Galilee and Samaria

At once, Varus dispatched a portion of his army to the part of Galilee near Ptolemais, under the command of his friend Gaius. The latter routed those who blocked his way, captured the city of Sepphoris, burnt it, and enslaved the inhabitants. (69) Varus himself with the main body pursued his march into Samaria; he spared the city since he was informed that when the rest of the country was in ferment, it had raised no trouble. He encamped near a village called Arous [*d*] which belonged to Ptolemy and for that reason had been plundered by the Arabs who were very angry even with Herod's friends [*d*]. (70) From there he went to Sappho [*e*], another fortified village, which they ravaged as well as the neighboring villages they encountered on their march. Fire and bloodshed were on every side and nothing could check the depredations of the Arabs. (71) At the command of Varus, Emmaus too, abandoned by its inhabitants, was burnt to the ground, tc avenge Arius and the men who had perished with him.

2. The rebellion in Jerusalem quelled by Varus

(72) Then he marched to Jerusalem where at the first sight of his forces, the Jewish camps melted away, their occupants disappearing into the countryside. (73) However, the citizens of the city welcomed Varus and disclaimed all responsibility for the revolt. They declared that they had never stirred but had been forced by the occurrence of the festival to admit the swarms of people, and that rather than having joined the rebels they had actually been besieged with the

Romans. (74) Previous to this, Varus had been met outside the city by Joseph, the cousin of Archelaus [*a*], by Rufus and Gratus at the head of the royal army and the Sebastenians [*b*], and by the Roman legionaries with their customary arms and equipment. As for Sabinus, not daring to come into Varus' sight, he had already left the city for the coast. (75) Varus sent a part of his army to scour the country for those responsible for the insurrection, and great numbers were brought in. Those who seemed to have taken a less active part he kept in custody, while the more aggressive, about two thousand, were crucified [*c*].

3. The campaign in Idumaea

(76) He was informed that in Idumaea there were still ten thousand men in arms. Finding that the Arabs were not behaving as allies should, but campaigning according to their own inclinations and ravaging the countryside more than he had intended because of their hatred of Herod, he dismissed them; and with his own legions he hurried to meet the rebels. (77) Before a blow was struck, they took the advice of Achiab [*a*], and gave themselves up. Varus acquitted the rank and file of any responsibility but sent the leaders to Caesar to be examined. (78) Caesar pardoned most of them, with the exception of some of the king's relatives—a few prisoners being connected with Herod by birth [*b*]—whom he sentenced to death for having fought against a sovereign of their own family. (79) Having thus settled matters in Jerusalem, Varus left as garrison the same legion as before and returned to Antioch.

Chapter VI

1. The Jewish delegation to Rome; their wish to be governed by Rome

(80) Archelaus in Rome was involved at the time in a new dispute with a Jewish delegation who, before the revolt [*a*], had been permitted by Varus to come and plead for autonomy for their people. The fifty-member delegation was backed by more than eight thousand of the Jews at Rome [*b*]. (81) Caesar summoned a council, composed of the Roman magistrates and his own friends in the temple of Apollo on the Palatine Hill [*c*] that he had built himself and decorated with outstanding lavishness. Most of the Jews stood with the delegation facing Archelaus and his friends. (82) His relatives' friends stood apart from both; since hatred and envy made them unwilling to associate with Archelaus, while they were ashamed to let Caesar see them with his accusers. (83) The relatives had also the support of Philip, the brother of Archelaus, who, had been sent through the friendliness of Varus for two purposes: he was to help Archelaus, but if Caesar divided Herod's estate among all his descendants, he was to secure a share of it [*d*].

74[*a*] Joseph, nephew of Herod and son of Herod's brother Joseph who was killed at Jericho, *War* I, 323, 324.

74[*b*] *The Sebastenians*, as Josephus terms them, are not "men from Sebaste," but a unit of auxiliaries raised (partly) at Sebaste and therefore called "Sebastenes" (Schürer, *History* Vol. I, revised edition, 1973, p. 182).

75[*c*] *Crucifixions* A common form of punishment widely practiced by the Romans especially among subject peoples. In Roman law it was applicable to crimes against the state or the emperor (lèse-majesté). However, Roman subjects were exempt from this form of execution. The exact manner of impalement has long been a subject of debate, especially that of Jesus, the most famous in history, until a dramatic find (1968) in the burial caves of the Givat Hamivtar necropolis, north of Jerusalem, sheds new light on the method of crucifixion. The skeleton of a Jew of unknown origin was found among thirty-five other skeletal remains preserved in fifteen ossuaries (in which bones were collected after burial). He was a male in his twenties who had been crucified in the first half of the first century AD. Both heel bones had been transfixed by a large nail to which the remains of a plaque of wood was still attached, and his shins had been deliberately broken. The man's knees had been doubled up and laid sideways, one on top of the other, and the two feet with the legs adjacent were transfixed by the same nail at the heels (see illustration I, 27).

78[*a*] Cf. 55[*c*].

79[*b*] Herod, the son of Antipater, was an Idumaean.

80[*a*] As noted in 41[*b*], this delegation of the people had arrived in Rome together with the various contenders to the throne and its failure precipitated the more explosive stages of the revolt.

80[*b*] *The Jewish community in Rome* was the oldest in western Europe with a continuous history since the second century BC or even earlier. The first reliable record of Jews there dates to 139 BC. As in other cities of the Roman Empire they were organized into a *politeuma*, a quasi-autonomous civic community similar in many ways to the Hellenic municipal organization, the *polis* (cf. *War* I, 31[*a*], our description of the *polis* in early Hasmonean times). The members of the politeuma were convened for the consideration of broad issues, as was the case in the meeting of Judaea's leaders with the emperor. The estimates regarding the number of Jews in Rome vary from 20,000 to 60,000. The subsequent relations between Rome and Judaea, as will be seen, and the intermittent wars, with their aftermath of Jewish slaves brought to Rome, reinforced the community.

81[*c*] Apollo's temple on the Palatine Hill was situated near Augustus' palace.

83[*d*] *Share* Varus' opportunism was known to his contemporaries. See note 41[*b*].

Coins of Herod Antipas

85[*a*] *Lawlessness* This is a vivid description (corresponding to that given in note 55[*a*]) of the desperate situation in Judaea, drawn by the indignant witnesses.

86[*b*] *Xerxes* refers to the Persians and the restoration of Judaea: Cyrus II founded the Persian empire after capturing Babylon in 538 BC. Immediately, he granted permission to the exiles of Judaea in Babylon to return to their homeland and rebuild their temple (Ezra 1; II Chron. 36; 22–23). The return under Ezra is placed by Josephus during the reign of Cyrus' third successor as king of Persia, Xerxes I (486–465 BC).

91[*c*]–92[*d*] *Why was Judaea disillusioned with the Herodians?* Considering the fact that the Judaeans, for reasons of national pride, would be naturally inclined to choose a national sovereign rather than opt for foreign rule, it is significant that on this occasion they begged the Romans to take Judaea out of the hands of the Herodian family and annex it to the larger Roman province of Syria. This is a measure of the terrible price the Jews had paid for past Herodian rule. Incidentally, Nicolaus, who represented Archelaus during this crisis, reports as an historian both the pros and the cons in an objective manner without distorting the drift of the Judaean argumentation. However, his final peroration before the emperor showed his obvious bias, or possibly his cunning.

93[*a*] *Ethnarch* A "ruler of the nation" but lower in rank than a king.

93[*b*] See note 100 [*m*].

Above: Herodian coin

Below: Bronze coin of Herod Philip, son of Herod the Great, who ruled since AD 4 over Caulanitis Trachonitis, the Bashan and Paneas (II, 95, Antiq. *XVII, 189). It dates to AD 8 and represents the façade of a shrine with four columns which Herod the Great dedicated to Augustus Caesar in 20 BC*

Another coin of Herod Antipas. It was forbidden to carry or look at, or fashion an image, on a non-Jewish coin. Luke 20, 24-25 and parallels show that the Zealots' extreme view about coins was not accepted

2. Declaration of the Jewish deputies

(84) First, the plaintiffs were given permission to state their case and began by enumerating Herod's crimes. "He was not a king whom they had to bear with," they declared, "but the most savage tyrant who ever lived. Many had been executed by him, and the survivors had suffered so much that they envied the dead. (85) Not only had he tortured individual subjects, but whole cities; he had crippled his own towns and embellished those of other people; he had shed the lifeblood of Judaea to gratify foreigners. Depriving them of their old prosperity and their ancestral laws, he had reduced the people to poverty and utter lawlessness [*a*]. (86) The fact was that in the course of a few years the Jews had endured more calamities at Herod's hands than their ancestors had endured in all the time since they left Babylon to return to their country in the reign of Xerxes [*b*]. (87) Since they had become so subservient and accustomed to misery they had submitted without a struggle to the continuance of their bitter slavery under Herod's successor; (88) they had readily acclaimed Archelaus, son of such a cruel tyrant, as king on the death of his father, chosen by themselves. They had joined him in mourning Herod's death and in praying for the success of his own reign. (89) Yet he, as though worried that he would seem no true son of Herod, had inaugurated his reign by massacring three thousand citizens—offering to God that grand total of sacrifices for his enthronement—and that was the number of dead bodies with which he filled the Temple during a festival! (90) Those who had survived such a succession of disasters naturally turned to face their calamities, and in accordance with the laws of war, preferred to stand up to the blows. They begged the Romans to have mercy on the remnants of Judaea, and not to throw what was left of it to those who would savagely rend it to pieces, (91) but to unite their country with Syria and administer it through their own governors [*c*]. This would illustrate how men now falsely accused of sedition and aggression actually knew how to submit to equitable governors." (92) With this request the Jews brought their accusation to an end. Nicolaus then rose and refuted the charges brought against the occupants of the throne and accused the people of being ungovernable and rebellious towards their sovereigns. Finally, he abused those of Archelaus' relatives who had gone over to the accusers [*d*].

3. Augustus' division of Herod's realm among his three sons

(93) After hearing both sides Caesar adjourned the meeting. A few days later he announced his decision. He gave half of the kingdom to Archelaus, with the title of ethnarch [*a*], promising to make him king if he would prove himself worthy [*b*]; (94) the other half he divided into two tetrarchies which he bestowed on two other sons of Herod, one on Philip, the other on An-

tipas who had contested with Archelaus for the kingdom. (95) Under Antipas were placed Peraea and Galilee [*c*], with a revenue of two hundred talents. Batanaea, Trachonitis, Auranitis and certain portions of Zeno's domain [*d*] in the neighborhood of Paneas [*e*] were awarded to Philip, with a revenue of one hundred talents. (96) Archelaus' ethnarchy comprised the whole of Idumaea and Judaea [*f*], besides Samaria [*f*], the district which had a quarter of its taxes remitted as a reward for not joining the revolt. (97) The cities placed under his rule were Strato's Tower [*g*], Sebaste, Joppa and Jerusalem; but the Greek cities of Gaza [*h*], Gadara and Hippos were detached from his realm and added to Syria [*h*]. The territory given to Archelaus produced a revenue of four hundred talents [*i*]. (98) In addition to what the king had left in his will, Salome was appointed mistress of Jamnia [*j*], Azotus [*j*], and Phasaelis [*j*]; and as a gift from Caesar she received the palace at Ascalon. From all these she collected a revenue of sixty talents, but her own domain came under the general jurisdiction of Archelaus. (99) Each of Herod's other descendants received what had been left as inheritance in the will. On the two unmarried daughters [*k*] Caesar bestowed in addition 500,000 drachmas [*l*] of silver and gave them in marriage to the sons of Pheroras. (100) Having divided up Herod's estate, he also apportioned among them all the legacy Herod had bequeathed him, amounting to a thousand talents; he kept a few heirlooms of no intrinsic value in memory of the departed [*m*].

Chapter VII

1. The pseudo-Alexander

(101) At this time, a young man Jewish by birth but brought up at Sidon at the house of a Roman freedman, took advantage of his physical resemblance to pass himself off as the Alexander whom Herod had executed [*a*], and thinking himself safe from detection came to Rome. (102) He had as his assistant a compatriot who was familiar with all affairs of the realm, whom he instructed to declare that the men detailed to execute him and Aristobulus [*b*], had been moved by pity to smuggle them away, leaving instead bodies resembling theirs. (103) With this tale he completely deceived the Jews in Crete [*c*], and, provided with rich supplies, he sailed to Melos [*c*]. There, by the utter plausibility of his story, he collected a much larger sum and induced his hosts to sail with him to Rome. (104) Landing at Dicaearchia [*d*], he obtained large donations from the Jews there, and was escorted on his way like a king by the friends of his supposed father. The likeness was so convincing that men who had seen Alexander and known him well swore that it was he. (105) The whole Jewish community in Rome poured out to see him, and vast crowds thronged the

95[*c*] Peraea and Galilee were populated entirely by Jews, even though their territories were not continuous and were separated by the Jordan Valley (see map).

95[*d*] *Zeno's domain* These territories lay north of Transjordan and east of the Jordan Valley. It would seem that both Jewish and gentile populations enjoyed satisfactory conditions as regards land settlement and cultivation.

95[*e*] *Paneas* A region south and east of Caesarea Philippi. It is referred to as Ituraea in Luke 3, 1: "Philip, tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis."

96[*f*] His territory included both of the country's best harbors. Samaria and Idumaea were able to tolerate a son of Herod as their ruler.

97[*g*] *Strato's Tower* was the former Phoenician site of Caesarea (founded by Herod; *War* I, 408–414). The name "Strato's Tower" was not forgotten after the foundation of Caesarea.

97[*h*] *Gadara* and *Hippos* (modern Susita) were both situated in an enclave southeast of the Sea of Galilee. The port of *Gaza* had opposed Herod's rule throughout and was granted autonomous status in his day. They were termed "Greek cities," not because of their unique civic constitutions, but because they were almost entirely Greek in population, whereas the other cities had large Jewish populations (L. I. Levine, *ibid.*, p. 156).

97[*i*] It came to 600 talents according to *Antiq.* XVII, 320.

98[*j*] *Jamnia* (biblical Jabneh) and *Azotus* (biblical Ashdod) on the southern coastal plain of Palestine. *Phasaelis* was a Herodian domain in the Jordan Valley. *Ascalon* (biblical Ashkelon) was an ancient Philistine town on the southern coast.

99[*k*] Roxana and Salome.

100[*l*] Or 1,500 talents, according to *Antiq.* XVII, 323.

100[*m*] *Augustus' treatment of Herod's will* Augustus deviated from Herod's testament on one very important point. Archelaus was for the time being denied the title of king and had to be satisfied with that of ethnarch (93[*a*]). In taking this step, Augustus was influenced by Archelaus' failure to maintain peace in Judaea immediately on seizing the throne and by his rash handling of his people. He did, however, promise to confer on him the title of king at some later time, if and when he proved himself worthy of the monarchy. In any event, Archelaus never did attain the superiority over his brothers as his father's will had prescribed (cf. 111[*b*]).

101[*a*] *The impersonator from Sidon* See *War* I, 551 (Alexander's execution in Caesarea).

102[*b*] The brother of Alexander.

103[*c*] *Crete* is a large island southeast of Greece; *Melos* is a small island north of it. The Jews of Crete are referred to in I Maccabees 15, 23; The Jewish diaspora in the Aegean archipelago was already in existence in the second century BC and prospered for centuries.

104[*d*] *Dicaearchia* was the Greek name for the busy port of Puteoli west of Naples.

Coins of Herod Archelaus

106[*a*] *War* I, 452 (Herod takes Alexander to Rome for trial).

111[*b*] *Nicolaus concludes his account of Jewish affairs* Josephus' historical narrative becomes much more condensed from this point to mid-first century AD and reveals very little of Archelaus and the subsequent governing body in Judaea. It may be noted that Nicolaus' public career ended with his defense of Archelaus and his reign. This was also Nicolaus' last act relating to Jewish affairs and it is therefore inferred that this ended his influence as a historical source on the subsequent parts of *War* and *Antiquities*. In any case, Nicolaus' monumental work *Historiae* (Universal History) in 144 books ends with the period shortly following Herod's death. For the history of the subsequent period in *War* and *Antiquities* Josephus uses his own unidentified Jewish sources, as well as Roman historical commentaries for specific details of the subsequent struggles with Rome.

Archelaus' disastrous career Despite the paucity of details provided by Josephus on Archelaus' reign as a whole, it can be summed up as follows: The ten years of his reign (4 BC–AD 6) were a disappointment from the outset. After his return from Rome, he once more engaged himself in rooting out the vestiges of the revolts. It was he who put an end to the extensive guerilla war of Athrongaeus the shepherd and his brothers (*War* II, 64). After his appointment as ethnarch, he adopted the dynastic name "Herod," and so did his two brothers the tetrarchs. Their need to defend themselves against their subjects lessened their mutual rivalries, but the simultaneous adoption of the name Herod was a sign of the conflicting claims of Archelaus and his brother Antipas. This use of "Herod" as a dynastic name, was presumably meant to show that each regarded himself as the true heir and successor of Herod. They also used this name on their coins (as illustrated). In general, Archelaus attempted to emulate the manner in which his father had ruled. Like his father and brothers, chiefly Antipas, he devoted his energies to development and building projects. He rebuilt the palace at Jericho that had been burned by Simon the Zealot. He also built Archelais in the flourishing date-palm region of the Jordan Valley (*Antiq.* XVII, 340). However, he had neither his father's talents nor his ability to maintain good relations with Augustus, and he was no more acceptable to his Jewish subjects than his father had been.

narrow streets through which he was carried; for the Melians, having lost their wits so completely, went as far as to carry him in a litter and furnish a royal retinue at their own expense.

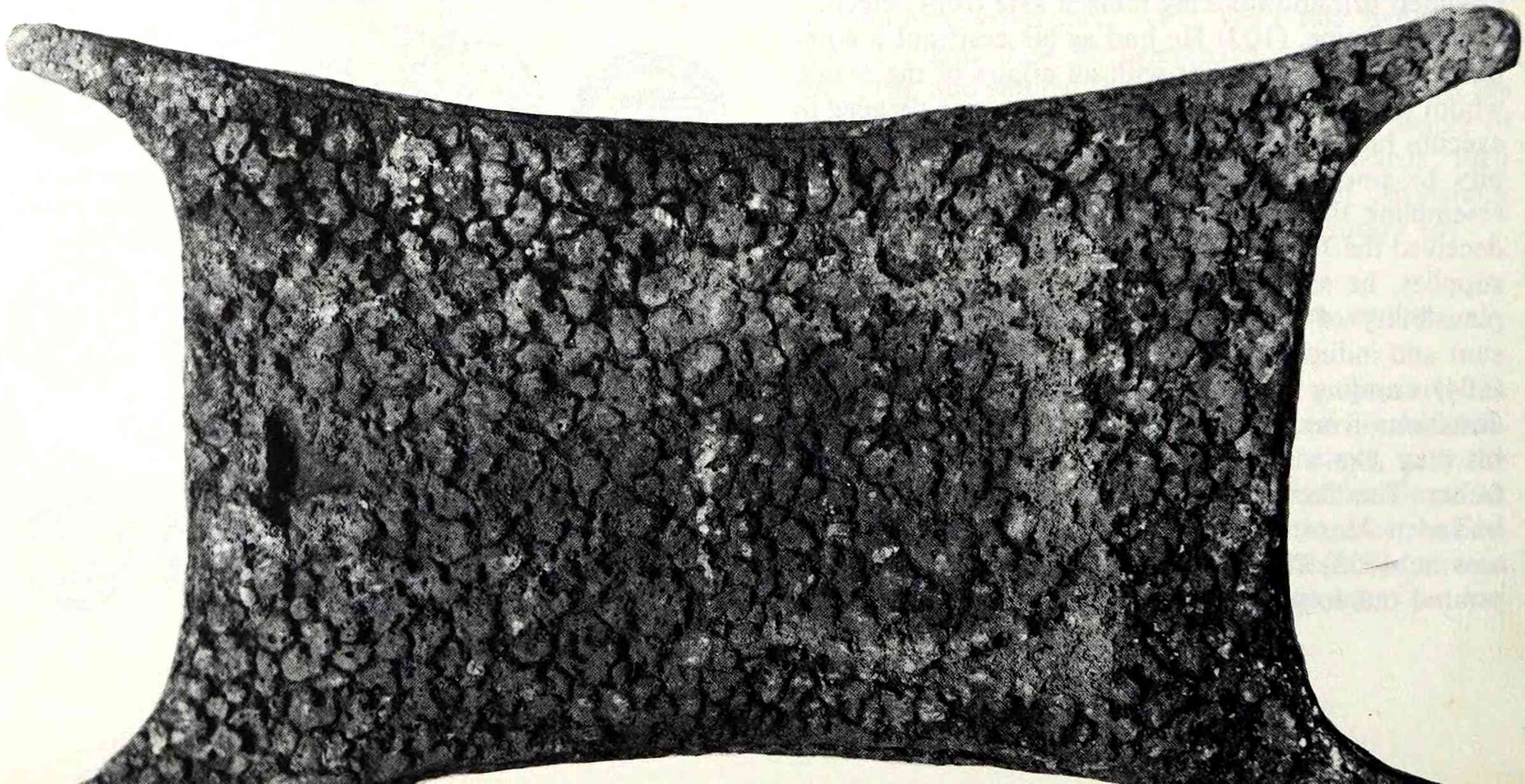
2. The impostor detected by Augustus

(106) Caesar, well-acquainted with Alexander's features since he had been arraigned by Herod before him [*a*], guessed before even seeing the man that this was a case of impersonation. However, on the chance that there was something behind these sanguine hopes, he sent out Celadus, one of those who remembered Alexander well, with orders to bring the young man to him. (107) No sooner had Celadus set eyes on him than he observed the difference in his face, and noting that the whole body was tougher and more like a slave's he saw through the whole plot. (108) He was most indignant at the audacity of the fellow's statements. For, when he questioned him about Aristobulus, he would reply that he too was alive, but had been left behind in Cyprus as a precaution against treachery, as they were less exposed to attack when apart. (109) Therefore Celadus took him aside and said: "Caesar will spare your life in return for the name of the man who induced you to play such a trick." Promising Celadus to give him the required information, he accompanied him to Caesar, where he pointed out the Jew who had traded on his likeness to Alexander; for he himself had actually received more gifts in every city than Alexander had received in his lifetime. (110) Caesar laughed at these words, and in consideration of his good physique sent the pseudo-Alexander to join his oarsmen; but ordered the man who had inspired him to be executed. As for the Melians, he considered that they were sufficiently punished for their folly by their wasted extravagance.

3. Archelaus' cruelty and deposition

(111) Established as ethnarch, Archelaus [*b*] could not forget the old feuds, and treated not only Jews but even Samaritans [*c*] with great brutality. Both peoples

Sums in the tens of "talents" (a unite of measure) could be paid only with gold or silver bullion as this silver talent found in Cyprus



sent deputations to accuse him before Caesar. Consequently, in the ninth year [*d*] of his rule, he was banished to Vienna [*e*], a city in Gaul, and his property transferred to Caesar's treasury.

Archelaus' dream

(112) It is told that before he was summoned to Caesar, Archelaus had the following dream: he saw nine tall and full-grown ears of grain devoured by oxen. Sending for the soothsayers and some of the Chaldaeans [*a*], he asked them what they thought it meant. (113) Various interpretations were given; Simon, one of the sect of the Essenes [*b*], suggested that the ears of grain denoted years and the oxen, a revolution, because as a result of their ploughing they overturn the soil. Therefore he would reign for as many years as there were ears of grain, and would die after living through various revolutionary changes. Five days later Archelaus was called to his trial.

4. The dream of Glaphyra, Archelaus' wife

(114) I think it fit also to mention the dream of his wife Glaphyra, daughter of Archelaus, King of Cappadocia. She had first married Alexander, the brother of Archelaus, whom we have mentioned [*a*], and son of King Herod who put him to death as explained. (115) When he died she married Juba, King of Libya, and when he too died [*b*] she returned home and lived as a widow in her father's house until the ethnarch Archelaus saw her, and fell so deeply in love with her that he instantly divorced his wife Mariamme [*c*] and married her. (116) Glaphyra had barely returned to Judaea when she had a dream of Alexander standing over her and saying: "Your Libyan marriage was quite enough, but you were not content with it; you now return to my home after choosing a third husband and, you impudent woman, my own brother at that [*d*]. But I shall not overlook this insult and will fetch you back to me whether you desire it or not." Having related this dream, she lived but two more days.

111[*c*] *Samaritans* As ethnarch Archelaus aroused the anger not only of the Jews, but also of the Samaritans, who seldom joined forces with their Jewish neighbors. At the hearing that the emperor Augustus gave in AD 6 to the joint Jewish and Samaritan embassies, the latter accused Archelaus of cruelty toward his people contrary to the express orders of Augustus. Both embassies, with a unanimity that must have been unique, came to demand the abolition of the monarchy.

111[*d*] *Antiq.* XVII, 342 specifiies "the tenth year"; so does the historian Dio Cassius, IV, 27, 6 and Josephus' *Life* I, 5.

111[*e*] He was banished to Vienna in Gallia Narbonensis on the east bank of the Rhone, southern France, in AD 6.

112[*a*] *Chaldeans* Old traditions attributed to the Chaldeans powers of soothsaying, dream interpretation and magical customs.

113[*b*] *Essenes* Josephus gives a detailed description of the sect, which he greatly admired, in *War* II, 119–161. This will be accompanied by our commentary on their beliefs, customs and writings. The dream in question seems to be modeled on Pharaoh's dream in Genesis 41 and appears to be adapted to contemporary Aggadic literature (composed of stories, moral instruction, and sayings of the wise as related to biblical episodes) with which the literature of the Essenes (in the Dead Sea Scrolls) is also familiar.

114[*a*] *War* I, 476. After Alexander's death, she was sent back to her father with her dowry but without her children, (552–553).

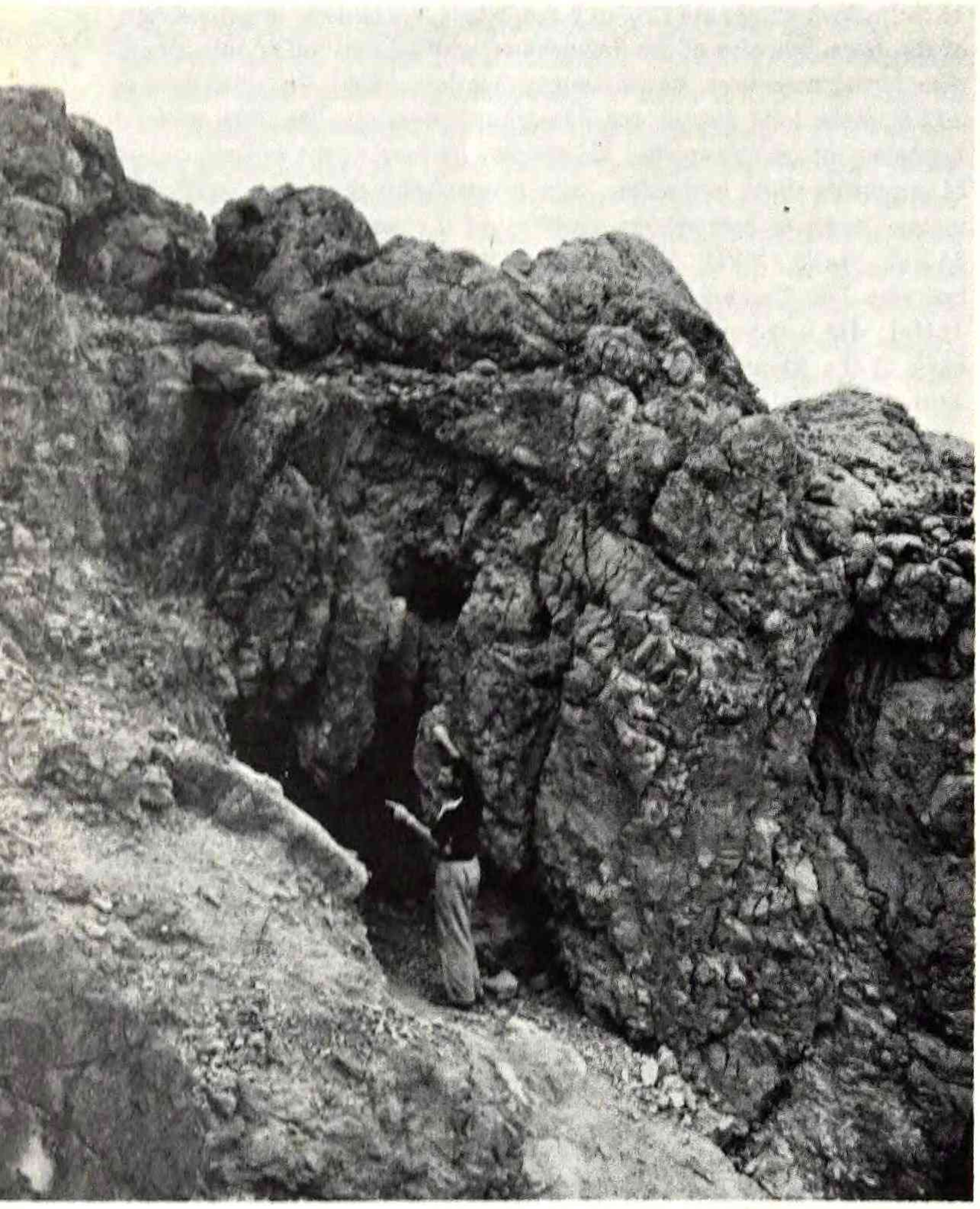
115[*b*] *Juba II,* a learned friend of Augustus who gave him Mauritania (Libya) as a client-kingdom. Juba's first wife was Cleopatra Selene, daughter of Antony and Cleopatra, and his second marriage was to Glaphyra. The date given as Juba's death is an error, as he died in AD 23. Consequently it may be inferred that Glaphyra left Juba after he divorced her.

115[*c*] Mariamme is mentioned only here and in the corresponding passage in *Antiq.* XVII, 352.

116[*d*] Since Glaphyra already had three children by Alexander (*Antiq.* XVII, 341), the second marriage was contrary to Jewish law (Leviticus 18, 16; 20, 20). However, had the first husband died childless, the marriage would have been obligatory (Deuteronomy 25, 5).

Left: The large "Cameo of the Dioscourides" or "Gemma Augusta" portrays Augustus Caesar with the crown of laurel over his head, namely as king of the world to whom the constellation of Capricorn (facing the crown) brings happiness. The emperor is surrounded by other manifest symbols of his glory (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum)

Inscription on a column in honor of the tetrarch Philip



One of the Essenes' most important settlements was at Qumran as described in par. 121 ff. The first cave to be discovered there contained the Manual of Discipline, two Isaiah scrolls and the War scrolls

Chapter VIII

B. JUDAEA BECOMES A ROMAN PROVINCE. DESCRIPTION OF THE JEWISH SECTS

1. Coponius, the first procurator of Judaea

(117) The territory of Archelaus was annexed as a Roman province [*a*], and Coponius [*b*] was sent out as a governor of Roman equestrian rank. He was entrusted by Augustus with full powers and authority to inflict the death penalty [*c*]. (118) During his administration, a Galilean named Judas [*d*] incited his countrymen to revolt, declaring that they were cowards if they submitted to paying taxes to the Romans after serving God alone and tolerated mortal masters for their lord. This man was a sophist [*e*] who founded a sect of his own [*f*], which was quite unlike the others [*g*].

2. The Three Jewish sects

(119) Among the Jews there are three schools of thought. Their adherents are called Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes [*a*] respectively.

The Essenes, their way of life and communal organization

(120) The Essenes are known for their extreme piousness and saintliness [*b*]. Jews by birth, they show a greater mutual attachment than do the other sects. They eschew pleasure as a vice and regard temperance and control of the passions as virtues. They disdain marriage, [*c*] but adopt other people's children while still pliable and teachable, thus moulding them after their own ways [*d*]. (121) They do not, indeed, condemn wedlock in principle as a means of continuing the race, but they desire to protect themselves against women's wantonness, since they are convinced that none of them keeps her pledged faithfulness to one man [*e*].

3. (122) They hold wealth in contempt and maintain an admirable community of goods, and none of them will be found to be better off than the other. Their rule is that new members admitted to the sect must surrender their property to the order so that among them no humiliating poverty nor excessive wealth is ever seen, but each man's possessions become part of the common resources and, as with brothers, their entire patrimony belongs to them all. (123) They regard oil as polluting, and if a man intentionally comes in contact with it, he scrubs himself; for they regard it most desirable to keep the skin dry and always to wear white [*a*]. They elect officers to supervise the affairs of the community, the particular services of each officer being determined by a general vote.

117[*a*] *Roman province. What led to the provincialization of Judaea?* The few laconic sentences by Josephus at this critical phase of Jewish history (111 b, c) can hardly convey the true significance of the transformation in the rule of Judaea. Therefore we will attempt to explain the broader background of events, the internal and those that were interrelated with Roman rule. *Augustus' alternative choices:* After deposing Archelaus from the ethnarchy of Judaea, the emperor was presented with a choice of various forms of Roman government that could be applied to Palestine. One of these was the incorporation of Archelaus' domain into the neighboring province of Syria as the Jewish and Samaritan embassies had requested. M. Stern (*ibid.*, p. 129), believes that the relative insignificance of Archelaus' domain ought to have disqualified it from becoming a Roman province in its own right, especially as the governors of Syria held Judaea under close surveillance. The Romans also refrained from taking such a step out of regard for the unique position of the Jews in relation to their religion and way of life, which were totally different from those of their Syrian neighbors. Thus it required exceptional handling, and Augustus was obliged to adopt a policy of separation between Judaea and Syria. An alternative solution was to appoint a Herodian princeling as ruler of Judaea. This would mean a continuation of Augustus' policy, by which Rome ruled indirectly through a "client-king" or subject ally; but the emperor no longer favored this policy for Judaea, as explained in previous pages. After being petitioned by the two delegations from Palestine and mindful of what they had suffered during the reigns of the Herodians, Augustus judged it inexpedient to foist on them another member of this dynasty and thereby drive them further into opposition to Rome. Moreover, none of Herod's sons seemed suitable either from the point of view of imperial interests or acceptable to the Jewish people.

117[*b*] *Coponius, the first procurator or prefect AD 6–9* In view of the above considerations, Augustus had no other option but to create a new province, Judaea, which would be governed by a Roman chosen from the *equites* (the equestrians or middle-class order in Roman society) and directly appointed by the emperor. The ancient name "Judaea" simply reflected (in Roman eyes) the fact that the Jews formed the majority of the population of Palestine at the time.

117[*c*] Coponius commanded a body of troops and enjoyed full judicial powers *(jus gladii)* including the infliction of the death penalty. He came to Judaea with Quirinius, the legate of Syria, and would seem to have won the respect of the Jews. There are grounds for believing that one of the western stone-built gateways to the Temple Mount esplanade was called after him, namely the Gate of Kiponos (*Mishnah, Middot* 1, 3) The single event of any importance that occurred during his term of office was the desecration of the sanctuary of Jerusalem by the Samaritans, when they scattered bones of the dead about the Temple area during the Passover celebration (*Antiq.* XVIII, 80).

118[*d*] *Judas the Galilean and the taxes and census of Quirinius.* P. Sulpicius Quirinius, the Roman legate of Syria (AD 6–11), was entrusted with establishing the basis of the new government. His appearance in Judaea is connected with the holding of a census throughout the country. Taking a census for purposes of taxation was quite normal on the creation of a new province (Roman norms of taxation being different from those obtaining in former Herodian days). In Judaea, however, the census led to disturbances, as it symbolized subjugation to a foreign power, in other words to a Roman take-over. (*Antiq.* XVIII: 1–2; Luke 2, 1–3; Acts 5, 37). It also greatly offended the religious feelings of the people. In other provinces the census also met with opposition, and there were demonstrations against the Roman authorities. One of the rebel leaders from the time of Varus, Judas of Gamla or "Judas the Galilean" (see 56[*e*]) led the revolt against the census. He and his companion, Zaddok the Pharisee, inflamed the anger of the people by representing the census as a symbol of the final and absolute subjugation of the Jews to Rome. Thanks, however, to the efforts of the high priest Joezer, son of Boethus, popular feeling was brought under control during Coponius' term of office. The census of Quirinius is cited by Luke in connection with the nativity of Jesus of Nazareth (2, 1–7), occasioning a vast amount of scholarly literature in response to Josephus' dating of the census in AD 6, whereas Jesus was born circa 5 BC; also Acts 5, 37. Josephus makes no reference to Jesus in his *War,* though he does mention him in *Antiq.* XVIII, 63–64. See Appendix: Testimonium Flavianum.

118[*e*] Josephus used the term *sophist* when he referred to an itinerant teacher or rabbi in his native environment. The Greek sophists had developed pedagogical techniques in teaching ethics, public speaking, and stressing the earnestness of thought. Contemporary rabbis and teachers were also influenced by sophist terminology and teaching methods, although the liberty-loving Judas, the Zealot teacher and leader, had nothing in common with Hellenistic philosophy or creed. Perhaps not knowing how to describe the Jewish equivalent for a philosophic teacher, the translator used the term sophist (*Wars* I, 648 [*a*]).

118[*f*] *A sect of his own. The genesis of the Zealot movement* The early days of Roman provincial rule were still marked by a spirit of reconciliation between the leading classes and the Roman authorities. The mass of people, except for groups in Galilee, still regarded their position as no worse than under Herod's administration. But at the same time, this period saw the birth of extremist groups, who regarded any foreign rule as intolerable and opposed Jewish submission to a temporal power. This was the movement that led to the ferment over the census of Quirinius. Public calm was restored and a head-on clash with the Romans was averted until the prefecture of Pontius Pilate (*War* II, 169–174). In about 10 BC Judas the Galilean (son of Hezekiah *War* II, 56) and his comrade the Pharisee Zaddok were regarded by Josephus as the founders of the Zealots (*Antiq.* XVIII, 23–25). He regarded them as a "fourth sect," elaborated in 118[*d*], added to the three. On the other hand this Galilean family was active in the war with Varus. With these men, there began a heroic and tragic line of short-lived kings, martyred leaders and brave fighters for freedom. Combating both the Romans and the adherents of the Herodian fellowship, they developed the concept of inaugurating the eschatological reign of the Kingdom of Heaven for God's elected people here and now. Though Judas the Galilean was killed, apparently by the Romans (Acts 5, 37), his descendants left their mark on events in Judaea until the outbreak of the first great revolt against Rome in AD 66.

118[*g*] The "others" referred to by Josephus were the three sects described in great detail in the ensuing chapter (*War* II, 119–166—a shorter version appearing in *Antiq.* XVIII, 11–22). After listing the three sects (Essenes, Pharisees and Sadducees), which he terms "philosophies" in the Greek style, Josephus adds significantly in *Antiq.* XVIII, 23–24: "As for the fourth of the philosophies, Judas the Galilean and the prophet Zaddok set themselves as its leaders." He was referring to the party of the Zealots. "This school agrees in all other respects with the opinion of the Pharisees, except that they have a passion for liberty that is almost unconquerable, since they are convinced that God alone is their master and leader. They think little of submitting to death ... for I have no fear that anything reported of them will be considered incredible." These statements have been interpreted variously by modern commentators; but they represent. all the same, a genuine record of the Zealots "who had nothing in common with the others," as this was both a messianic and revolutionary movement.

Who were the Zealots? Confusion arises through the frequent mention of the word Zealots in many obscure passages. Modern scholarship has tried to define the origin and development of this movement—a problem that has been obscured for endless years, in no small part due to Josephus' animus. Are the Sicarii mentioned in note *War,* II, 433, who are generally defined as a degenerate branch of the Zealots (indeed of the same sect. This problem is defined in note *War* II, 433[*c*]). The Zealots' ideological attitude to paganism was uncompromisingly hostile; and this accords well with the highly colored picture which the ancient Christian Hippolytus has inserted in his description of the Essenes (*Refutati, omnium haeresium* 9, 26 CBS.) There it is said that the Zealots are so extreme in their observation of the precepts that they do not even touch a coin, their reason being that it is forbidden to carry, or look at, or fashion an image. This is why all pilgrims coming to Jerusalem were enjoined to change their money which bore the image of Caesar for Jewish shekels. They never entered a city, for fear of passing through a gate surmounted by statues and on no account could an uncircumcized person mention God without facing serious consequences. This is why they adopted the name Zealots (in Hebrew *Qana'im).* They are mentioned for the first time after the victory of the Jews over Cestius Gallus at Beth-Horon; nevertheless their existence precedes this incident since they shared in the flagrant expression of revolt against the emperor when they cut off sacrifices "for his welfare." Josephus refers to them when he confronts them with Ananus (Hanan ben Hanan) one of the leaders of the temporary government (*War* II, 651).Thereafter, the use of the word Zealots becomes frequent mainly in *War* IV, where refugees streamed into Jerusalem and attached themselves frequently to the extremist patriots who pressed for change in the moderate leadership of the upper classes. The former are branded by Josephus as "brigands" and other epithets, as observed in our commentaries. A revolutionary change in the social structure of Judaea occurred when a step was taken to annul the rights of the oligarchy of the high priesthood and to democratize the office of the high priest. It is probable that during this period no one outside of these families of Boethus or Ananus could ever have become high priest, yet through the struggle of the Zealots, high priests were chosen by lot (*War* IV, 139–157), which to Josephus was a "monstrous impiety." Despite Ananus' bitter speech against the Zealots, the scales were tipped in their favor. In alliance with John of Gischala, they were the most influential factor in Jerusalem. The whole situation changed when Simeon bar Giora entered Jerusalem and seized the Upper City, and the capital was divided into three sectors. The command of the Zealots remained in the hands of Eleazar ben Simeon who fortified himself in the Temple Mount (*War* V, 5–10). Then John infiltrated into the sanctuary on Passover and overpowered the Zealots (*War* V, 98–101) who disappeared in the underground passages known only to the priests. Nevertheless, the Zealots preserved their identity and remained under the command of their officers, and their soldiers were outstanding in the battles with the Romans (*War* V, 250; VI, 92, 148) and were attached to John of Gischala. We have read that Eleazar ben Simeon was the

recognized commander at the commencement of the civil war together with Zechariah ben Abikilus. The latter appears in *Talmud Gittin* 56[*a*] where both were priests (*War* IV, 225) and Eleazar ben Hananiah, another central figure at the beginning of the revolt, who now sided with the Zealots. According to M. Stern, the name *Qana'im* (Zealots) has probably something to do with normal priestly status (regardless of the high priestly oligarchy) "thus deliberately connecting them with Phineas ben Eliezer ben Aaron, the outstanding embodiment of zeal in Jewish tradition. The fortified base of the Zealots was in the Temple Mount, appropriate to men who derived their power from the priestly status. The democratized priests of Jerusalem constituted the main strength of the Zealot party, and their social prestige is recognized in an observation in *Wars* V, 6. In sum, it is important, on historical grounds, to assume that there is a link between the Zealots and the freedom ideology first formulated when Roman rule in Judaea began. Moreover, we learn from *Antiq.* XVIII, 4, 9–10 that one of the founders of the 'fourth philosophy' along with Judas of Gamla (probably identical with the Galilean person) was a priest Zaddok, and a prominent Pharisee scholar of the school of Shammai. The combination of sage and adherent of the 'fourth philosophy' mentioned by Josephus—and in the person of a priest—supports the idea that Zaddok was one of the ideological founders of the Zealots in Jerusalem during the Revolt and that it was apparently led by priests, and had affinities with scholarly circles." (M. Stern, *ibid.*, pp. 299-300) The possible link of the Zealots and Sicarii (note II, 433[*a*]) to the freedom ideology explains Josephus' condemnation of both as he ascribes to them the chain of calamities which led to the destruction of Jerusalem. In any case, the Sicarii continued to remain loyal to the family of the original Galilean leaders of the first century BC, while, in contrast, the Zealots adhered to no special family or dynasty of patriots, nor did they have any messianic expectations of any of their leaders. "A certain importance attaches to the fact that the leaders of the Zealots were drawn from the Jerusalem priesthood, whereas those of the Sicarii were Galilean in origin ...The most important act of the Zealots was to democratize the high priesthood... There is no hint in the sources that they went beyond this as did the Sicarii who sought far reaching social change during the Revolt" (M. Stern, *ibid.*, p. 301). Professor B. Mazar points out the peculiar associtation of the Zealots and the "prophet" Zaddok. It is strange to associate in this instance people who stood at the opposite ends of social and religious stratification at the time. This could be the subject of an interesting investigation and could be an early instance of the fact that during the following decades there evolved a revolutionary movement drawing on all sections of the populace. Zaddok is referred to in other instances as a Pharisee or a priest, and this is even stranger. Yet the evidence of Josephus cannot be put aside.

119[*a*] *Essenes* A briefer sketch of the sects is given in *Antiq.* XVIII, 11–22.

120[*b*] *Saintliness* Josephus' personal knowledge of the Essenes and archaeological verification: He tells us in his autobiographical work, *Life* 2, that between the ages of sixteen and nineteen he had absorbed the doctrines of the three "sects" of schools or thought (Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes) as well as with the ascetic Banus in Transjordan. (Josephus was a younger contemporary of Paul, born ca. AD 37. The *War* was published in Rome in AD 75–79, but no mention is made in it of Jesus or Paul.) A shorter account of the Essenes appears also in *Antiq.* XVIII, 4, 11. Our two other main contemporary sources are the Alexandrian philosopher Philo Judaeus and Pliny the Elder (*Natural History V*, 73). Josephus' description of the Essenes doctrine bears close resemblances to the ways described in the Qumran "Manual of Discipline," though he tried to explain it in terms understandable to Greek philosophy. Josephus relates that the Essenes shunned the large cities but does not mention a settlement near the Dead Sea, even though they were scattered among Judean villages. However, Pliny's description mentions an Essene settlement near the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, which is suggestive of Qumran. The discovery of scrolls at Qumran, on the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, verified and amplified Josephus' account (120[*d*]).

120[*c*] *Disdain marriage* It seems that in at least some of the communities celibacy may have been lifelong. On the other hand, Philo and Pliny the Elder maintain that the sectaries were mature or elderly persons, widowers perhaps, or men who segregated themselves from their families in order to pursue holiness. The Egyptian branch of this ascetic movement, the *Therapeutai,* also consisted of celibate men and elderly virgins.

120[*d*] *After their own ways evidence of the scrolls* The story of the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls is well-known and is perhaps the greatest archaeological find of the present century. In the spring of 1947 an Arab shepherd was looking for a goat that had wandered off among the rocky slopes of the cliff that towers above the area, later to be known as Qumran. Being rather weary, he sat down in the shade of a hollow in the rock and to amuse himself he threw a stone into a hole on the cliff face. A sound of something breaking echoed. At first, he fled in fear; he came back the next day with a cousin. They wormed their way through the hole into a narrow cavern, its floor strewn with potsherds. Behind them stood a row of eight large unbroken clay jars with their lids still on. The jars were empty except one, from which they extracted three scrolls. These found their way to a Bethlehem antiquities dealer and later to the Syrian Convent of St. Mark in the Old City of Jerusalem. Meanwhile, clandestine excavations began in the cave, and other scrolls, together with handfuls of fragments, were recovered from the debris, while Bedouin and antique dealers were going around Jerusalem's learned institutions offering their finds at very reasonable prices. In December 1948, Professor E. L. Sukenik of the Hebrew University was the first to recognize the very great age of these scrolls—two millennia—and to identify their Essene origin. A short time later, other scrolls were purchased by the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. As Palestine was then in the throes of the War of Independence (between the Jews and the Arabs, out of which grew the State of Israel), no enthusiastic purchasers were found in the United States. It was only in 1955 that they were purchased by the State of Israel for $250,000 and were eventually housed in the Shrine of the Book at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Archaeologists from various learned institutions then went over the area of Qumran and searched the hiding places where the manuscripts had been found, namely in Cave 1 (I Q) opposite the old ruins of the community settlement of Qumran. The most sensational discovery after Cave I took place in September 1952, when an old Bedouin remembered suddenly that when he had been hunting in the region, north of Qumran, he had followed a wounded partridge that had disappeared into a hole not far from the ruins. Finally he had reached his prey in a cave, where he had collected an old clay lamp and some potsherds. Young shepherds equipped themselves with ropes and food and climbed into the right cave (Cave IV). As they sifted the earth, their hand came upon a compact layer of thousands of manuscript fragments. This was followed by the diligent search of Father R. de Vaux, which resulted in the unearthing of innumerable fragments in Caves V and VI and eventually in X and XI (1952). During the same year, a shepherd found additional scrolls in a cave at Wadi Muraba'at, eleven miles south of Qumran.

The scrolls were mostly written on parchment, only a few on papyrus. One scroll was engraved on copper sheets and written in the Hebrew square script (see below). Palaeographers have divided the script into three periods: pre-Hasmonean, Hasmonean and Herodian. Some are copies of certain books of the Bible, made between the second century BC and the first AD. They are thus earlier by about a thousand years than any previously known Hebrew copy of the Bible. The most important scrolls discovered are: One complete scroll of *Isaiah* (fifty-four pages preserved); another containing twelve pages, chapters 53–60; an apocryphal scroll on Genesis (five pages); *a commentary or "pesher"* on the book of *Habakkuk* (twelve pages); *the Scroll of the War of the Children of Light against the Children of Darkness* (nineteen pages). *The Thanksgiving Scroll* (sixteen pages) and the two *Manuals* (eleven and two pages). In addition, thousands of fragments of the biblical books and several apocryphal writings make up the balance of the rich inventory of finds.

The writings of the Qumran sect include a large number of books peculiar to the theological views of the community and other sects that made their home in the Judaean desert. They fall into several groups: *The Commentaries,* which begin with a biblical passage, followed by a commentary according to a method that is specific to the convenanters of Qumran, namely *the pesher.* It does not call for a running explanation of the textual detail, nor does it encompass biblical law; it purports to

show how biblical prophecy is realized in the time of the commentator, or close to it. Thus, the originators of this form of *inspired* commentary explain the prophetic writings in relation to the history of the sect, as well as its founder and leader, the "Teacher of Righteousness," his history and the expectations of the "end of days." Some of these commentaries allude to contemporary events and provide a glimpse into the history of the Qumranites and the actions of its leader (see below). Most complete are the commentaries on the book of Habakkuk, and other fragments concern the book of Psalms, Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, and on verses from Genesis 49, II Samuel 7 and Psalms 2–3. *The Manuals* comprise three works: 1. The largest of these is the *Manual of Discipline,* which incorporates prescriptions for the annual ceremony of the community at which the covenant between God and the sect was reviewed; it embodies its ideology, its laws and regulations, the principles of religion and law and the rules of conduct for the sectarians. These are apparently the "writings" referred to by Josephus (136) 2. The second is the *Rule for all the Congregation of Israel in the Last Days.* 3. *The Scroll of the War of the Children of Light against the Children of Darkness,* which details the rules and strategy of the war with the Kittim (the Romans). The *Thanksgiving Scroll,* is a collection of hymns. The *Zadokite Documents* (or the Damascus Document); were, in large part, already known from a late copy found in 1896 among the ancient texts, preserved in a reliquary of the old Cairo Synagogue. It is known from this document that there was a community in Damascus affiliated with the Qumran sect and with the same way of life. This document contains exhortations aimed at making people return to the true faith. *The Copper Scroll,* consisting of two rolls of copper, lists hiding-places of fabulous treasures (not discovered).

Finally, the *Temple Scroll,* the longest of the Dead Sea Scrolls (28 ft.—nine meters long) was recently published and commented by Professor Yigael Yadin. This scroll called for the building of a new Temple, the final Temple "on the day of blessing." As stated, there are in addition innumberable small fragments of many other sectarian writings that were discovered and deciphered by many scholars, among them E. L. Sukenik, N. Avigad, Y. Yadin, M. Burrow, D. Barthelemy, J. T. Milik, F. M. Cross,, J. M. Allegro and others. That the sources have not been exhausted is proved by many as yet unpublished finds, including a complete phylactery that differs in some details from those now in use (see illustrations).

Many scholars, including A. Schalit, regard the "proto-Essenes" as the *Hassidim* of the Hasmonean period, the ascetic fighting isolationists who combined a fierce nationalism with religious and messianic fervor. Though they fought by the side of the Hasmonean family against the Syrians, they broke with them when the Hasmoneans assumed religious and political leadership. Their writings are full of complaints about wicked and unworthy conduct by other Jews. They were inspired by their "Teacher of Righteousness" whose identity has not yet been established.

121[*e*] *Faithfulness to one man* To quote Josephus: "It is because the husband, bound by his wife's spells or anxious for his children, becomes, unknown to himself...a different man, a slave instead of a freeman." Josephus' statement seems an exaggeration, but it may reflect an idealistic form of early Hassidism among the Essenes: the urge for holiness leading to continence and to humility, and the fear of sin, all of which combine into a discipline of piety. But it has also been remarked that sexual abstinence and the holy spirit were the hallmark of early prophecy. The Hassid's model was always the prophet Elijah.

123[*a*] *Wearing white* at religious services was a priestly custom: the priests of Jerusalem wore white during the Temple service. There was apparently in the Essene "philosophy" (a term used by Josephus for the benefit of Greek readers) a tendency to make the ritual practices of the priesthood binding on all the community.

The settlement of Qumran

124[*b*] *Every town. Qumran and settlements south of it:* Though Josephus and the Latin writers do not identify the site of the large colonies of the sect of covenanters, the community house of Qumran was their main center. Other settlements were discovered at Ein Feshka and Ein el-Ghuweir along the Dead Sea, south of Qumran, and Essenes also lived in Jerusalem (see below). Moreover, the group of "camps" in the region of Damascus, which are mentioned in their writings, have not been identified. *The site of Qumran,* excavated by an archaeological expedition headed by the late Father R. de Vaux, is situated on a man-made terrace above the Dead Sea, surrounded by precipitous ravines. A narrow court leads to a gate tower and to the various parts of the wide enclosure (some of the more important rooms lie to the south of the tower). One of the halls was identified as the *scriptorium,* open on one side, where the scrolls were copied. East of it is another court which comprised a large kitchen, laundry and some watertight reservoirs. South of this court lay the large assembly hall (21×12 m.), a pantry, additional reservoirs and a potter's shop where small and large jars were fired. The western part of the settlement contained workshops and storerooms, a flour mill, a baker's oven, a forge and silos for storing grain and fruit, as well as a stable. The water reaching the reservoirs could be obtained through a dam built across the adjoining Wadi Qumran from which an aqueduct and channels led rain water, from flash floods, to each cistern. A large cemetery (1,000 graves) lay beyond a stone wall. Most scholars now agree that Qumran was settled and enlarged by the Essenes in the days of King John Hyrcanus (135–104 BC) and thus assumed the shape in which it was recently revealed. An earthquake destroyed it in 31 BC (*War* I, 370–380) and it was rebuilt in the days of Archelaus. It was finally destroyed by the Romans in AD 68 (*War* IV, 449–450).

Two communal buildings uncovered at the Feshkha settlement: These date from the same period. It appears that some food was grown in this oasis and that it served as the farming center, providing not only Qumran with its shoe leather but also the leather on which scrolls were written. At *Ein el-Ghuweir* a large building served as the public center; a kitchen and considerable storage jars, cooking pots, stone vessels,

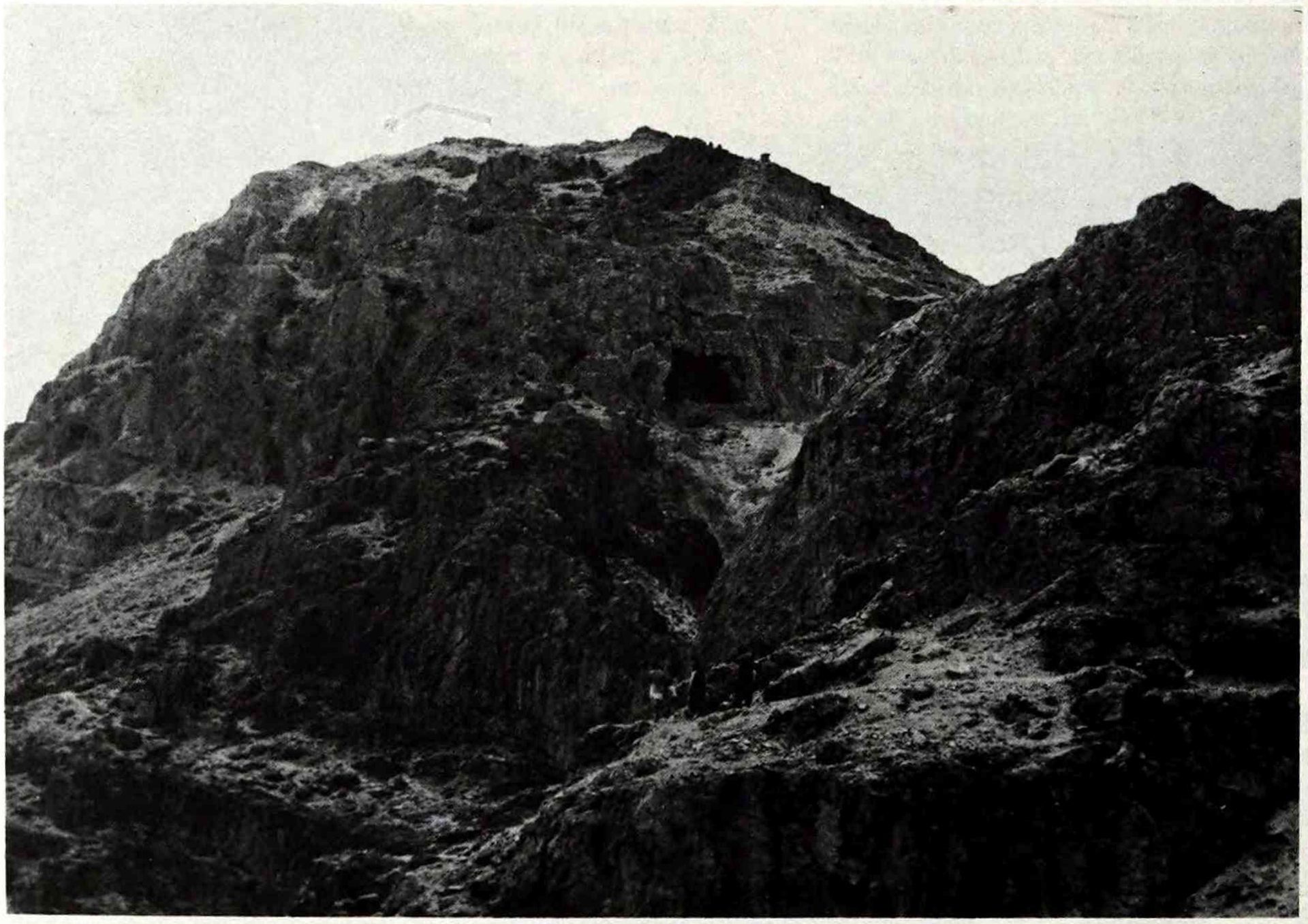
The communal settlements of the Essenes

4. (124) They populate no one city, but they are settled in great numbers in every town [*b*]. When adherents arrive from elsewhere, all local resources are put at their disposal as if they were their own, and they are entertained in the houses of men whom they have never known before as though they were the closest friends. (125) And so when they travel, they carry no baggage with them, but only weapons to ward off brigands. In every town one of the order is appointed specially to look after strangers and provide them with clothing and provisions. (126) In their dress and personal appearance they are like children in the care of a very stern tutor. They do not change garments nor shoes till they are torn to shreds or worn out with age. (127) Among themselves nothing is bought or sold, but everyone gives what he has to anybody in need and receives from him in return something he himself can use; and even without giving anything in return they are freely permitted to share in the possessions of any of their brothers.

5. Their mode of worship, occupations and purification

(128) They show devotion to the Diety in a way all their own. Before the sun rises they do not utter a word on secular affairs, but offer to Him some traditional prayers as if beseeching Him to appear [*a*].

Another cave at a higher level



Stairs leading to a mikveh *(ablution pool)*

(129) They are then dismissed by those in charge to various crafts for which they have the best ability and are employed in strenuous activity until the fifth hour [*b*], when they again meet in one place and, donning linen loincloths, bathe their bodies in cold water [*c*].

The refectory and sacred banquet

Thus purified, they assemble in a private hall of their own which none of the uninitiated is allowed to enter; (130) pure now themselves they go into the refectory, as to some sacred sanctuary [*d*]. After taking their seats in silence, the baker serves them their loaves in turn, and the cook sets before each one a plate with one kind of food. (131) The priest says grace before the meal [*d*], and none may eat before this prayer. After breakfast he offers a sacred prayer, for both at the beginning and end they give honor to God as the giver of life. Then, removing their sacred garments they again go back to their work till evening [*d*]. (132) On their return they eat in like manner and seat their guests beside them if any have arrived. No shouting nor disorder ever desecrates their house; they speak in turn, each giving way to his neighbor. (133) To people outside the silence within seems like some awesome mystery; it is the result of their unfailing sobriety and the restriction of their allotted portions of meat and drink to a simple sufficiency.

miscellaneous pottery and cemetery, provide evidence of a secondary settlement. This might be one of a string of settlements spread over the Judaean wilderness and along the shores of the Dead Sea, many of which remain undetected. Feshkha lay some 4 km (2.5 miles) south of Qumran and Ein el-Ghuweir, further south.

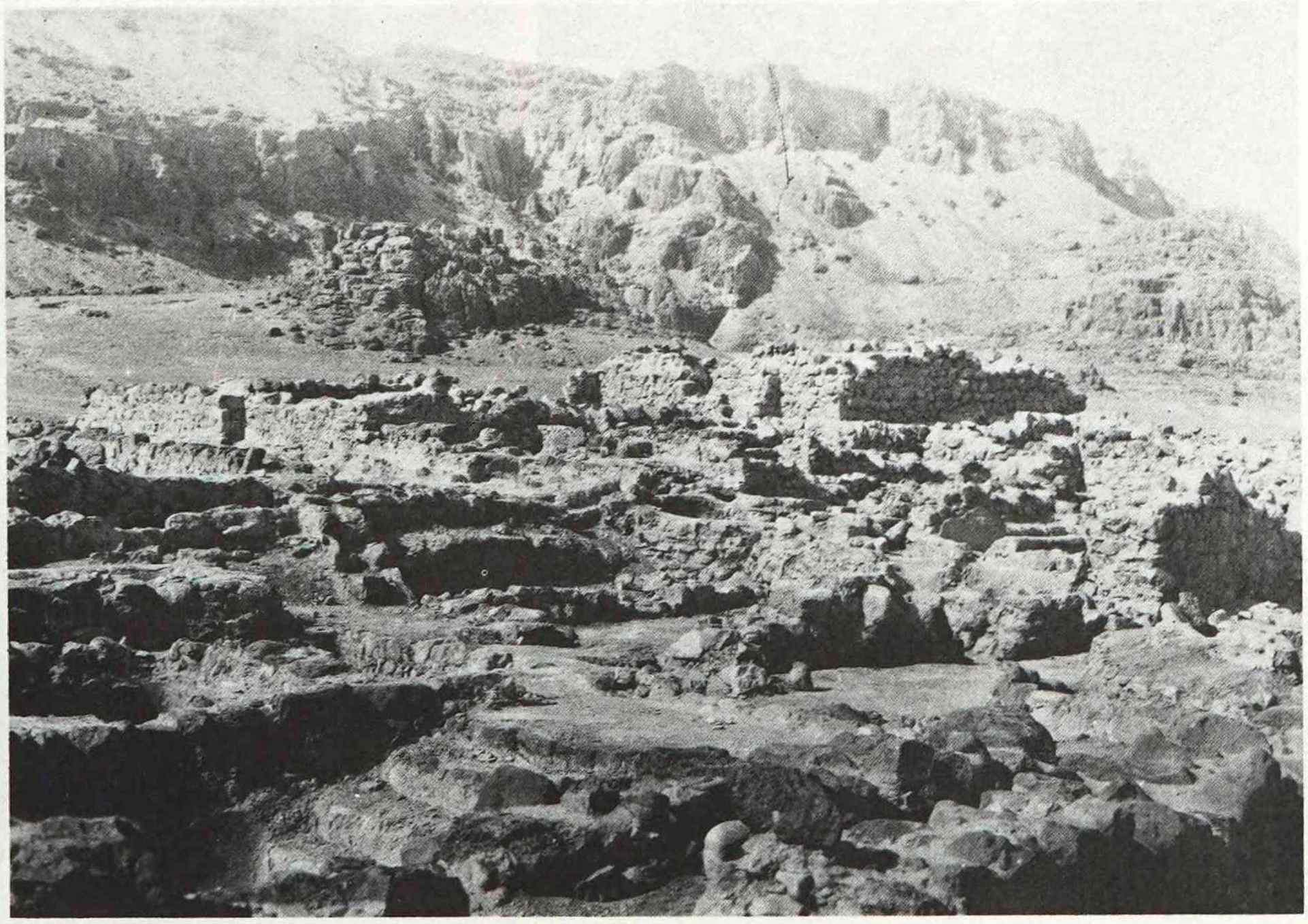
128[*a*] The divine morning office, as described by Josephus, has been misinterpreted as attesting a reverence for the rising sun. However, in terms of grammar, it can only refer to the direction of prayer, especially as the Temple of Jerusalem faced the rising sun.

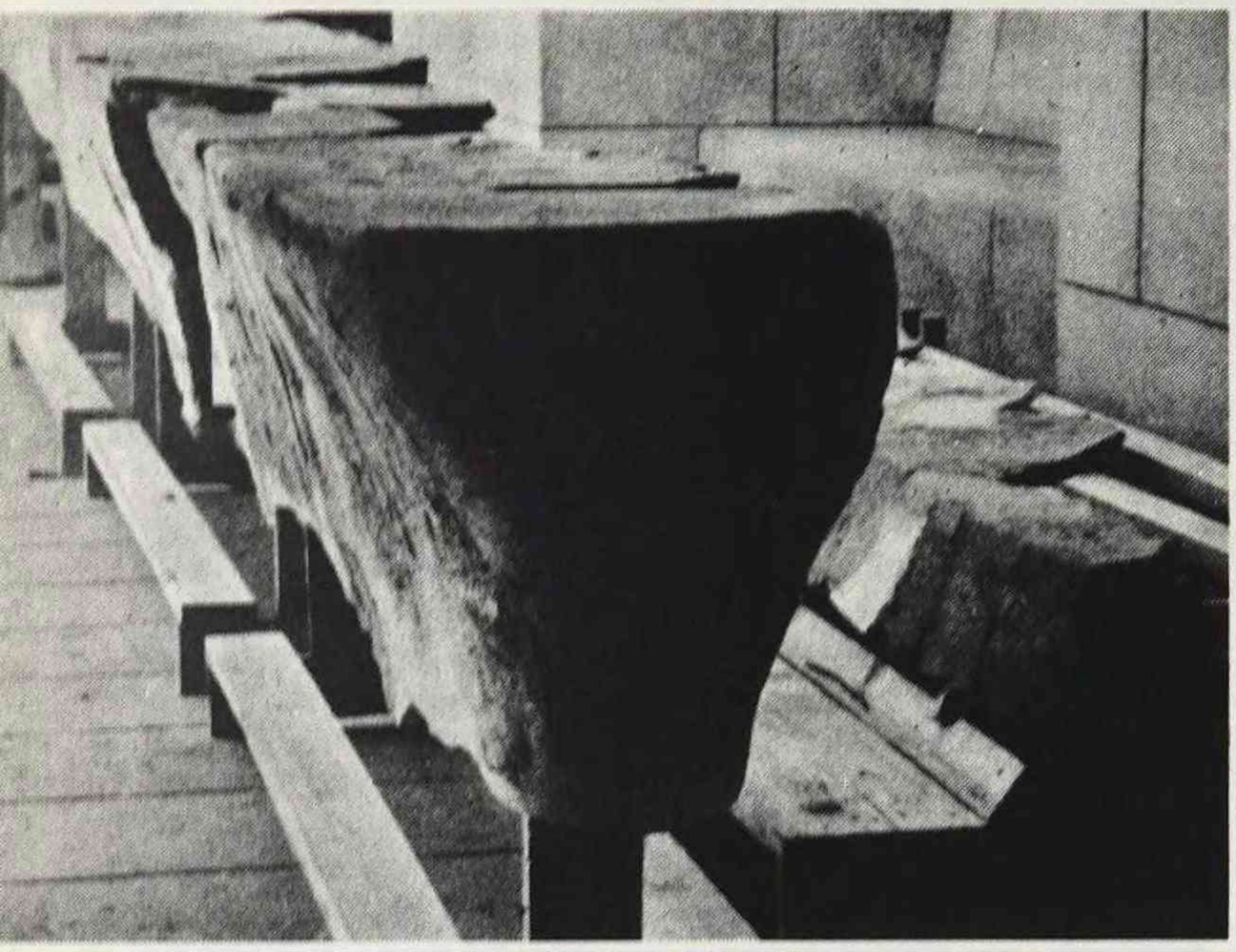
129[*b*] *Fifth hour* Ablutions took place an hour before noon.

129[*c*] *Ablutions, baptism and purity of soul* Josephus' reference to the subject in *Antiq.* XVIII, 17 suggests, according to D. Flusser, a close link between the ablutions of the Essenes and John's baptism: "he exhorted the Jews to practice justice towards their fellow and piety towards God, and so doing to be united by baptism. This, in his view, was a necessary preliminary if baptism was to be acceptable to God." This elevates purification through ritual ablution to a rite of moral purification or, in Josephus' terms, links purity of body with purity of soul. This was not stressed in Pharisaic Judaism. In other words, the Essenes' unusual approach to ritual purification gave rise to the concept that sin causes bodily defilement, hence Essene ablution would purify the body and soul if it is preceded by atonement. The ritual regulation concerning ablution in the *mikveh* (purification bath) were carried out by Jews as a matter of course. Among Essenes, however—and the followers of John the Baptist—the ritual of ablution has a distinct spiritual connotation. See description of the reservoirs in the note 124[*b*] and illustr.

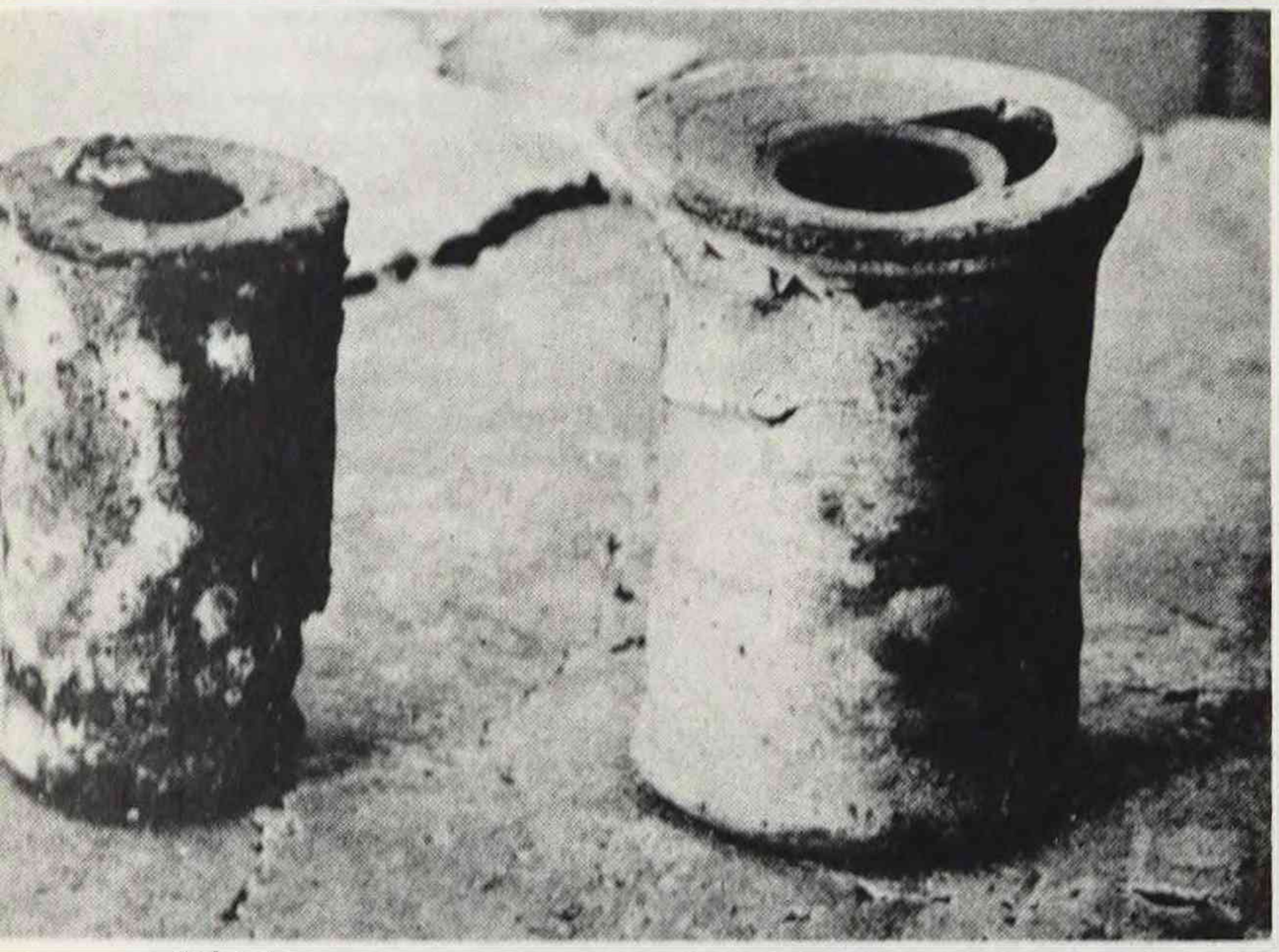
130[*d*]–131[*d*] *The Sacred Banquet.* The sacred meal consisted of taking the bread and wine, preceded by the blessings recited by a priest. The wine used on these occasions, *'tirosh'* (or grape must) was a sweet wine only lightly fermented. The early Jewish Christians used the same. The Essenes' sacred meals are a development of Jewish sacrifical laws, by which the priest and the faithful who offered a burnt offering somehow entered into intimate relations with God. The Essenes did not offer sacrifices and there is no trace of an altar at Qumran. Neither did they participate in the Temple sacrifices.

Houses, storerooms and pools of the Qumran settlement near the Dead Sea





Writings tables used by the Qumran scribes

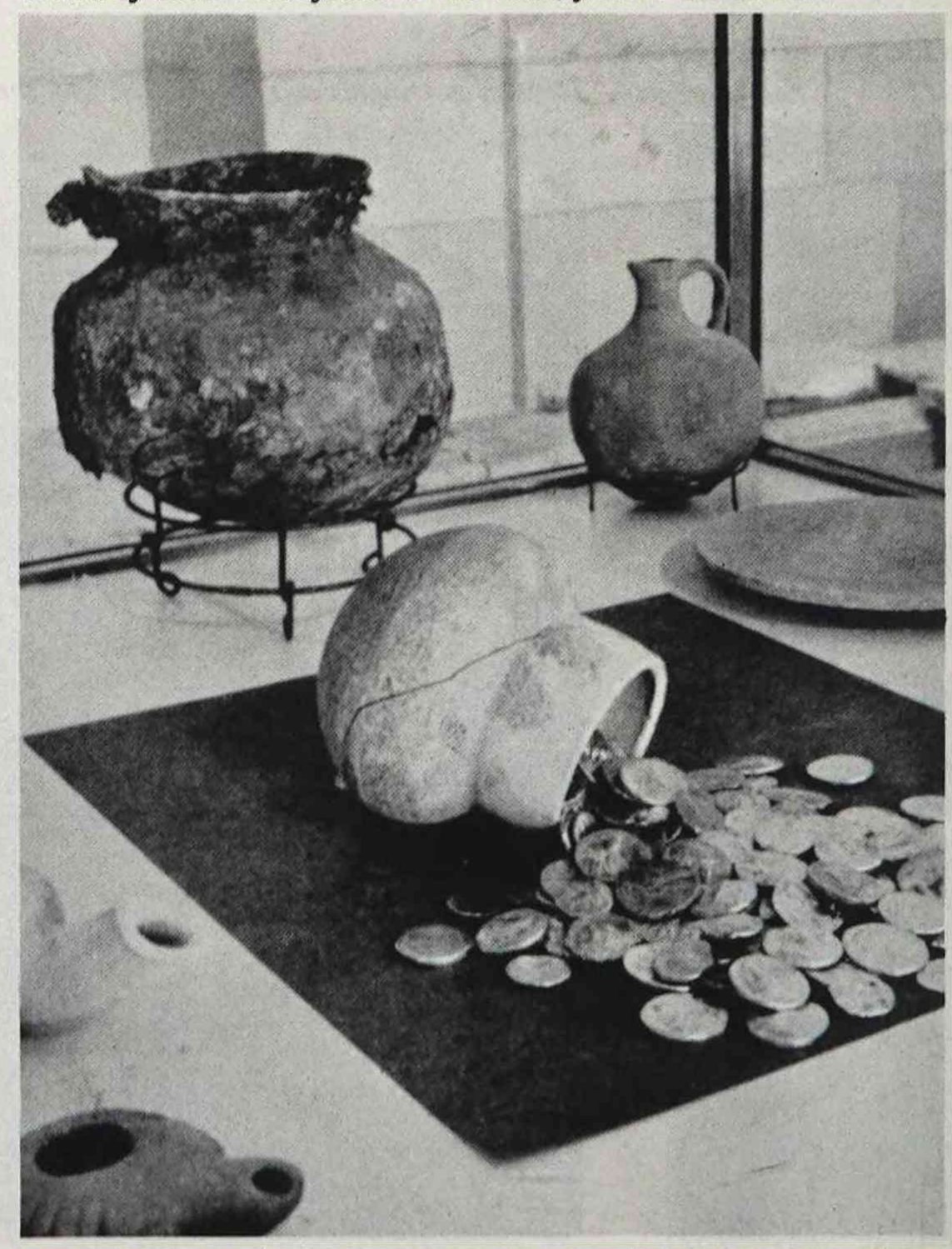


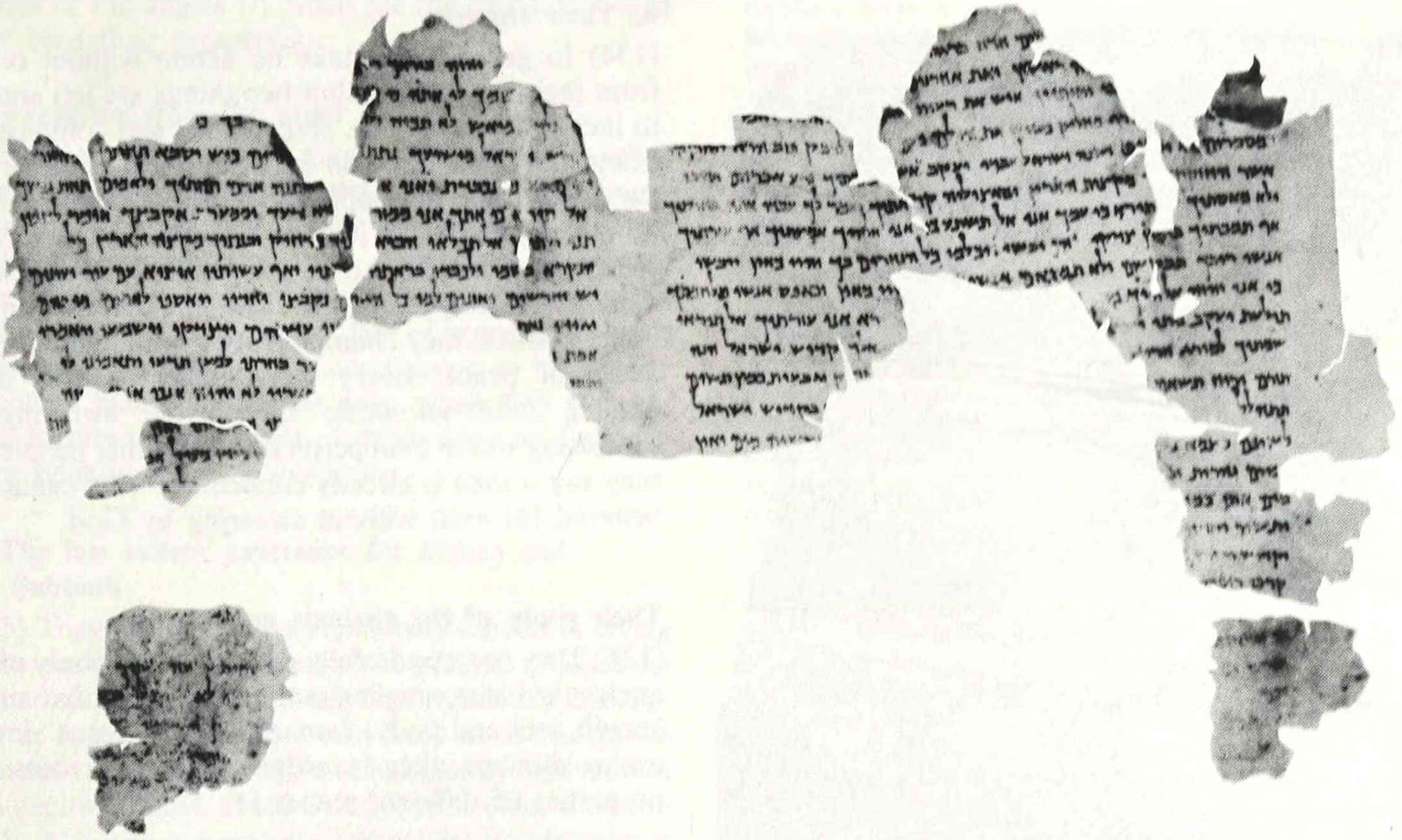
Inkpots

Rainwater washed down from the hills into the pools

Large jars where scrolls were stored and hidden away in the caves

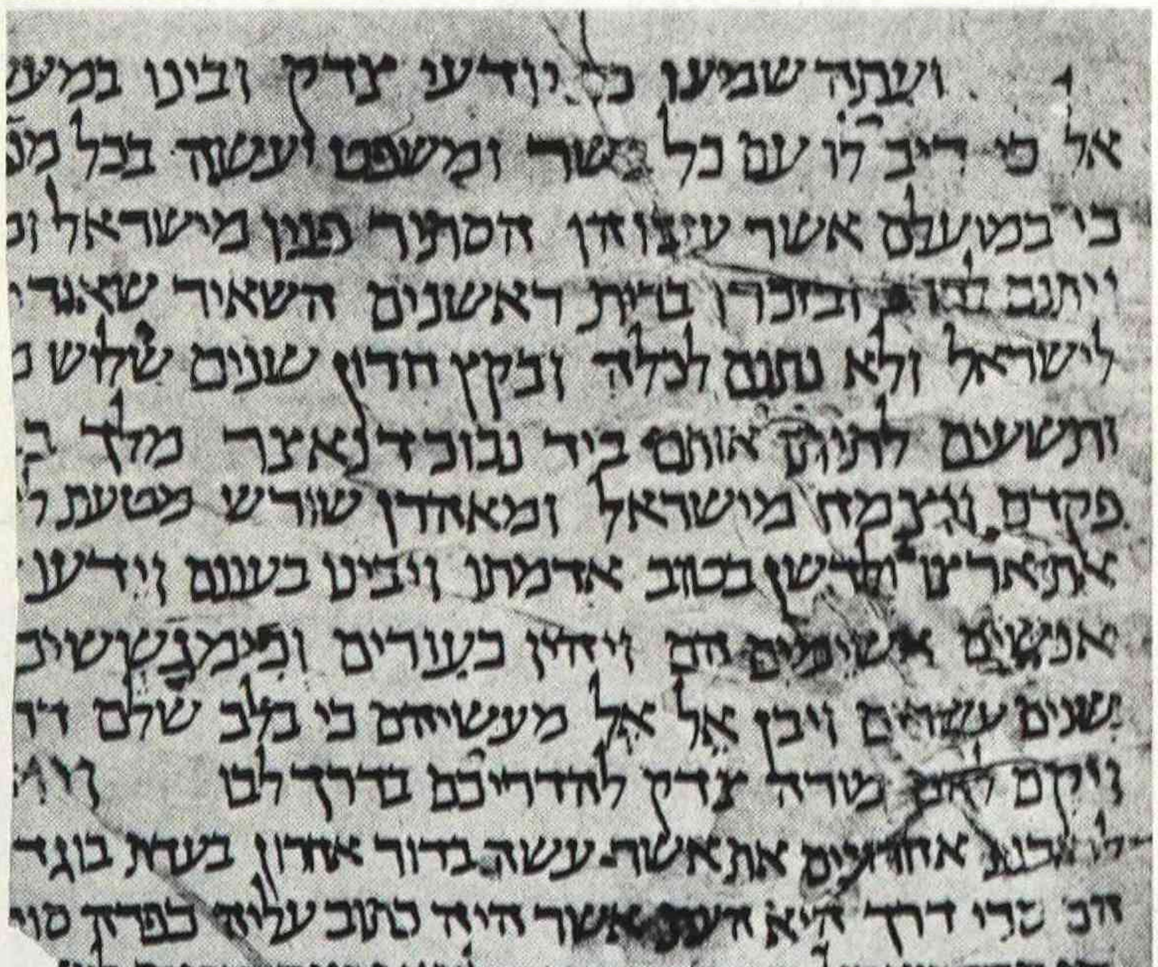
Hoard of silver coins found in the ruins, from 8 BC to AD 1



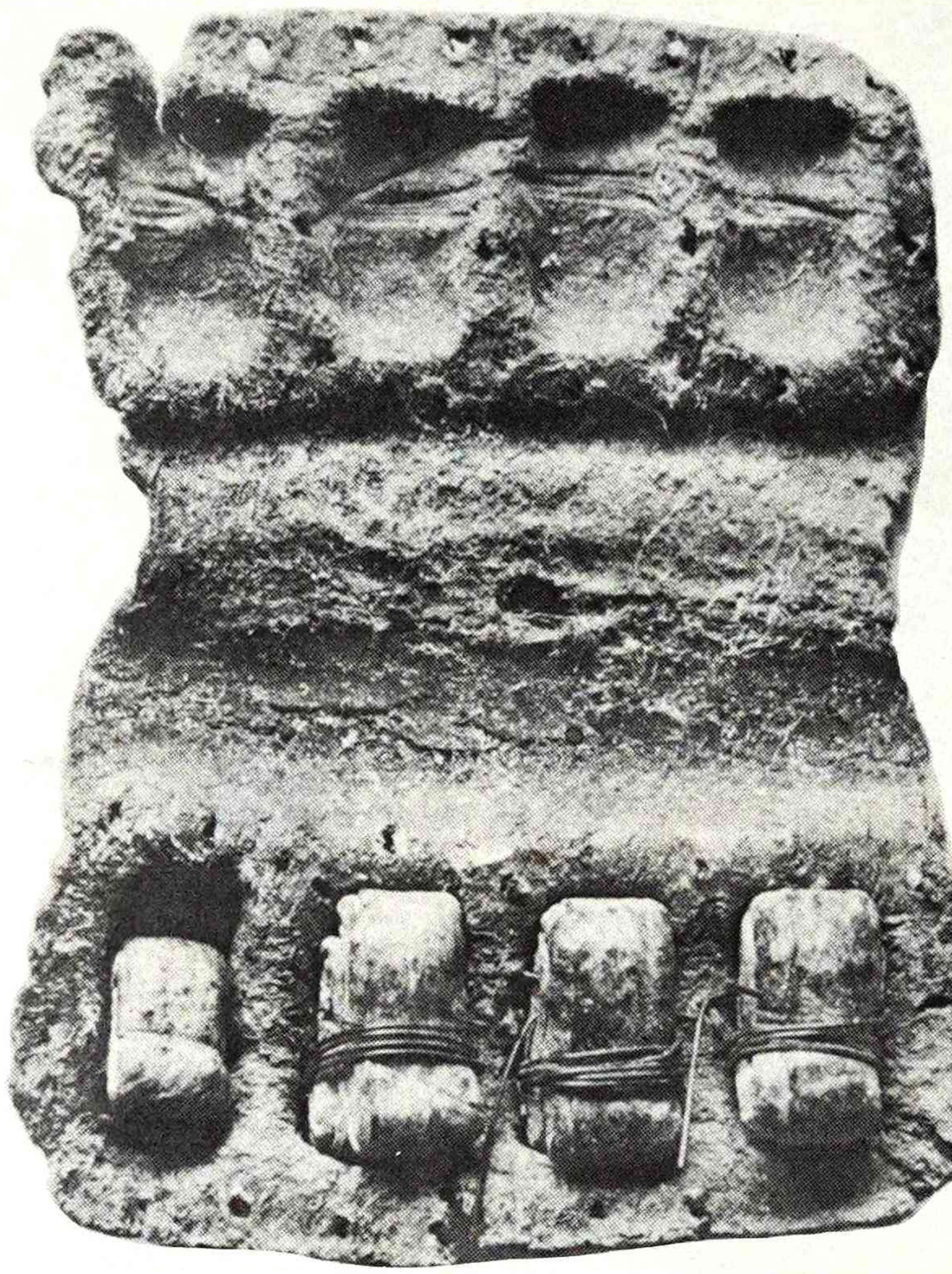


Scroll of Isaiah, 43, 1-13

First page of the "Damascus Pact" scroll



Thanksgiving scroll before opening



The side of an ancient phylactery (tefillin)

6. Their charity

(134) In general they take no action without orders from their supervisors; but two things are left entirely to individual discretion: personal aid and compassion. They may, of their own accord, help any deserving person in need, or supply the destitute with food [*a*]. However presents to relatives are prohibited without official sanction from the supervisors. (135) Showing indignation only when justified, they keep tempers under control; they champion good faith and serve the cause of peace. Every word they speak is more binding than an oath; they avoid swearing as something worse than perjury among other people, for they say a man is already condemned if he cannot be believed [*b*] even without swearing by God.

Their study of the ancients and disease

(136) They are wonderfully devoted to the study of the ancient writings, singling out mostly books that aim to benefit soul and body; from them, and with a view to curing diseases, they investigate medicinal roots and properties of different stones [*c*].

7. Condition of admission of novices

(137) Persons desirous of joining the sect are not immediately admitted [*a*]. Remaining outside the fraternity for a whole year, a man is required to observe the same rule of life as the members, receiving from them a hatchet [*b*], the loin-cloth mentioned above, and white garments [*c*]. (138) When he has given proof of his temperance during this probationary period, he is brought into closer touch with the rule and permitted to share the purer waters of sanctification [*d*], but is not yet received into the meetings of the community. For after having demonstrated his strength of purpose, his character is tested for two more years, and only then, if found worthy, is he accepted into the society. (139) Yet, before he may touch the common food, he is made to swear great oaths [*e*] first, that he will piously revere the Deity; secondly, that he will deal justly with men, will injure no one either of his own accord or at another's bidding; that he will forever hate the wicked and fight the battle of the just; (140) that he will at all times keep faith with all men—especially with the powers that be, seeing no ruler attains his office except by the will of God [*f*]. If he himself receives power, he will never abuse his authority nor, either by dress or additional ornament, outshine his subjects; (141) he will love truth [*g*] forever and expose liars; will keep his hands from stealing and his soul innocent of unholy gain; never hide anything from the members of the sect or reveal any of their secrets to others [*h*], even if he is tortured to death. (142) He further swears to transmit their rules in no other manner than he himself received them; to take no part in armed robbery; and to preserve the scrolls of the sect and in the same way the

134[*a*] The Essene texts bear witness to a fine moral sense. The sick and the old were supported by the community chest. Philo confirms this. Charity was extended to all unfortunates, to those who were captured in a foreign land, virgins without a protector, orphaned children and to everyone of the brethren whose house in one way or another was threatened by danger. Almsgiving and sharing of property had become a communal obligation. The Essenes provide a much closer anticipation of the modern welfare state than anything in ancient Europe.

135[*b*] *Oath* They were excused from taking the oath of allegiance to Herod (*Antiq.* XV, 371; the same kind of oath is proscribed in the Sermon on the Mount). This discipline must not be confused with the "terrible oaths" attending the ceremonies of initiation (139).

136[*c*] *Stones* Probably charms or amulets. *Antiq.* VIII, 46–48 seems to regard the Essenes as dealers in charms rather than physicians and relates the manner of the cure and exorcism of a certain Eleazar. Healing, by laying of hands, is also mentioned in the *Genesis Apocryphon* (Dead Sea Scrolls) which derives its inspiration from the spiritual movement that embraced Essenism.

137[*a*] *Admitted* Each settlement of the Essenes had a superintendent who instructed and guided candidates for admission (145–146). By combining the data provided by Josephus and the *Rule for all the Congregation* found in Qumran, one can get a clear idea of the stages that candidates had to go through. They had to spend the first year as postulants following the sect's rule but were free to leave at any time. This is probably what happened to Josephus in his youth in his experience among the Essenes. The second stage of novitiate lasted two years. The novice was allowed to take part in some of the sect's practices at the end of the second year, such as the ritual ablutions. At the conclusion of the second year, he became a full member and could share in the "drink of

names of the angels [*i*]. Such are the oaths by which they bind their proselytes.

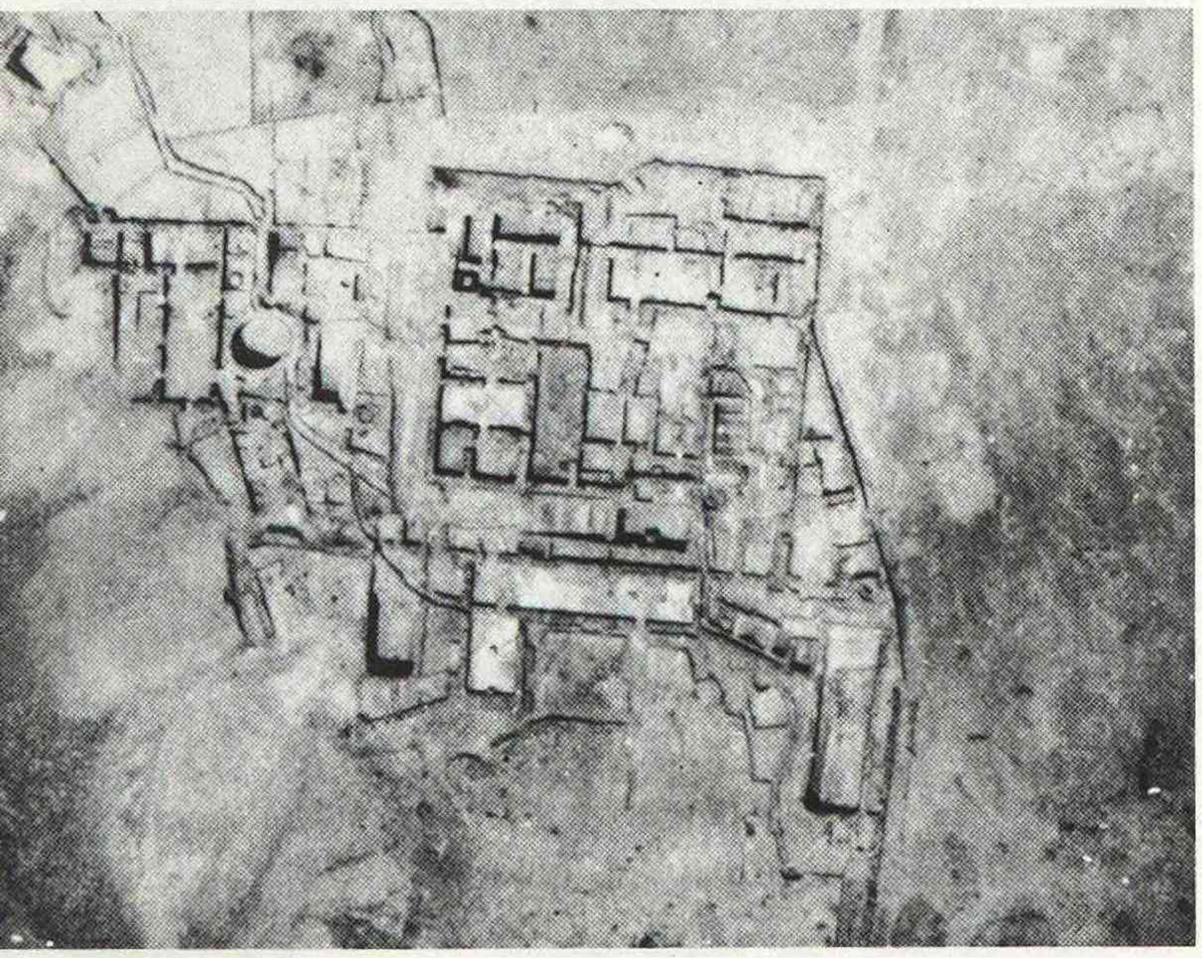
8. Expulsion from the order

(143) Men convicted of major offenses are expelled from the order; and the ejected individual often comes to a most miserable end; for being bound by their oaths and customs, he is not allowed to share other men's food and so he is forced to eat grass, his starved body wastes away and he dies of starvation. (144) This has led them out of a compassion to take many offenders back at their last gasp, since they feel that men tortured to the point of death have paid a sufficient penalty for their misdeeds.

9. The law courts' reverence for Moses and the Sabbath

(145) They are just and scrupulously careful in trying cases, never passing sentence in a tribunal of less than a hundred; their decisions [*a*] thus reached is not subject to appeal. After God, they hold most in awe the name of the Lawgiver [*b*], and blasphemy against him is a capital offense. (146) Obedience to older men and to the majority is a matter of principle; for instance, if ten sit down together one will not speak if the nine desire silence. (147) They are careful not to spit within the midst of the company or to the right [*c*], and are stricter than all Jews in abstaining from work on the seventh day. For not only do they prepare food for themselves one day before so as not to kindle a fire on that day, but also they do not endeavor to remove any vessel or even to relieve themselves.

An aerial view of the settlement



the many," the sacred meals and the practice of purity. When he attained full membership, the novice had to give up the private ownership of his property.

137[*b*] The object of the hatchet is explained in 148[*d*].

137[*c*] Cf. 123[*a*].

138[*d*] *Sanctification* The Dead Sea *Manual of Discipline* lays down far more severe degrees of sanctification than those observed by the Pharisees. According to *Antiq.* XVIII, 19 "they (the covenanters of Qumran) send votive offerings to the Temple (although they do not offer sacrifices) but perform the sacrificial act through different rituals of purification" i.e. as a substitute for the rite of the Temple (D. Flusser, *Jewish Sources in Early Christianity*, p. 85).

139[*e*] *Great oaths* seems to refer to the ceremony of initiation that took place on Pentecost, which was for the Essenes the feast of the renewal of the Covenant (described in their *Manual of Discipline*). The terrible oaths underscore their likes and dislikes and mark their mutual loyalties that set them apart as the Sons of Light (cf. First Epistle of John, 2, 9-11).

140[*f*] This may be compared with *Antiq.* XV, 374 when the Essene Menahem says to Herod: "You will reign, for God has deemed you worthy."

141[*g*] *Love truth. The doctrine of virtue and the two spirits* According to the Essenes' New Covenant, life consists on the one hand, of a struggle for the coming of the Last Times, and, on the other, a foretaste of the blessed life these times inaugurate. The force of Good (the Prince of Light) and the forces of Evil (Belial, the Angel of Darkness) struggle with each other for power over the present world and are in conflict even in the heart of man. As a result of their dualist outlook, which beheld the power of God ruling in the world in opposition to the power of evil, the Essenes saw themselves as the chosen "sons of light," elected as such by God. They believed that with the aid of the Holy Spirit they attained to a knowledge of "Divine Secrets," and their apocalyptic books (among them the Book of Enoch and similar works) probably were known by circles from which emerged the beginnings of Judaeo-Christianity, especially the circles close to John the Baptist and Paul. Although dualist, the Essene doctrine does not go beyond the limits of monotheism. Philo speaks also of the Essenes' practice of virtue. The latter would appear to have parallels in Paul's Gal. 5, 19-23; Eph. 4, 25-5, 13; I Cor. 6, 9; Col. 3, 5-9.

141[*h*] *Secrets* This exclusiveness helped to give the sect its closed and esoteric character. They also used cryptic devices for copying books considered to be particularly important.

142[*i*] *Angels* The later angelology of Rabbinic Judaism was partly of Essene origin but is even more common in the apocryphal writings and other esoteric material in the Intertestamental books (those between the Old and New Testaments, namely the Books of Enoch, Jubilees and Tobit).

145[*a*] *Decisions and legislative authority* According to the documents found at Qumran, legislative and religious authority belonged by right to the *Sons of Aaron* (priests). Matters that involved both juridical and executive authority, however, were referred to the *Moshav harabbim* (the Session of the Many), as assembly where both the Sons of Aaron and the laity had voting rights. In traditional rabbinical law the smallest, community must consist of at least ten members. Hence Josephus "tribunal" of 100 is consistent with this voting, since the basic unit at Qumran is often ten people i.e. nine plus a priest; consequently, this assembly, Moshav Harabbim, contained ten such units.

The structure of the hierarchy, was somewhat complicated. The group of camps in the region of Damascus (cf. 124[*b*]) was provided with two chiefs. One of them was a priest, entitled Priestly Inspector of the Many (harabbim), and the other was a layman, called the Superintendent *(hamevaqqer asher lekol hamaḥanot)*. The duties of the former were primarily religious while the latter assumed the responsibility for the community property as provided by the *Rule for all Congregations*. Each camp or settlement had a *mevaqqer* who instructed and guided candidates for admission. Some scholars argue that the *episkopos or bishop* of early Jewish Christianity derives from the *mevaqqer*.

145[*b*] The Lawgiver is Moses.

147[*c*] *The right* A similar prohibition applied only to prayer, as referred to in *Berachoth* III, 5 (Jerusalem Talmud).

148[*d*] *Novices. Location of latrines outside settlements* In a significant passage, the *Temple Scroll* (120[*d*]) written by and for the guidance of the Essenes, it is decreed that public latrines should be northwest of the city. They should be built in such a manner that the sewage would drain into pits; the place had to be roofed over so that the sewage would not be exposed within 3,000 cubits (close to a mile) of the city. This is based on a decree in Deut. 23, 12–14; a similar rule is found in the *War Scroll* discovered in Qumran. Did the Essenes indeed practice what they preached? In the light of this practice (going out to an open place outside the "camp" for their latrines), Y. Yadin writes, "We can say that also the Essenes living in Jerusalem (Josephus often mentions them) upheld this practice..." "...Reverting to the *Temple Scroll,* the Bethso or latrines of the 'City of the Temple' should be located northwest of the city ... not far from the Hippicus Tower at the northwest... This may also serve to explain the location of the 'Gate of the Essenes' along the western stretch of the city-wall ... Thus this gate, used by the Essenes daily came to be named after them" *(Jerusalem Revealed,* p. 91).

148[*e*] *Rays of the sun* The sun.

150[*a*] *Four grades* Although one Qumran scroll stresses a tripartie division: priests, Levites and people, elders and the rest of the people, another scroll stipulates a fourfold division: Priests, Levites, Israelites and proselytes, according to their seniority in religious life.

152[*b*] *Romans* The eventual persecution of the Essenes seemed to have come from their joining the Holy War (in the spirit of their *Rule of the War* scroll). The Essenes of Qumran, after hiding their manuscripts in caves (cf. 120[*d*]) joined the ranks of the other Jews who were fighting the Romans (called *Kittim* in the Qumran texts). This Holy War was doomed to pitiful failure and the main group of Essenes never returned to Qumran. We cannot say how the community survived. Another warlike act of the Essenes is mentioned in *Acts* 21, 38 when an Egyptian led a revolt in the time of the procuratorship of Porcius Festus (AD 60).

156[*a*] *Ocean* As described by Hesiod, "They dwell with carefree hearts in the isles of the blessed beside the deep-eddying ocean, those happy heroes..."

158[*b*] *Immortality of the soul* Cf. *Antiq.* XVIII, 18. The Essenes believed in the world to come—but not in the resurrection; and their belief in the immortality of the soul drew them to the Essene covenant.

159[*a*] *Predictions prove wrong* Josephus' and Philo's somewhat idealized account of the Essene communities mentions special individuals with gifts of divination. Various examples may be cited: Menahem the Essene who predicts royal dignity for the young Herod; Simon, who interprets the ethnarch Archelaus' dream that had troubled him before he was exiled (*War* II, 113); John the Essene at the time of the first Jewish Revolt (AD 66–70). They taught their art to disciples (*Antiq.* XIII, 311.) The gift of divination was not connected with the occult arts even though prophecy as such was believed to have ended. It was conceived as possible, however, that a favored individual might be endowed with the gift of prediction for there is nothing surprising in the survival of the "intellectual" aspect of prophecy with its professed insight into the future. On the other hand, in the Qumran doctrine, the real "prophet" was identified as the historical figure of the founder of the sect, the "Teacher of Righteousness."

161[*a*] *Periods of purufication* The correct rendering should be: three periods of purification. The Latin has: by constant purification or *"constanti purgationes"*.

161[*b*] The purpose of marriage: Their discriminating disciplines in this respect serve to underscore also the Essenes' opposition to polygamy. (Note: These brief descriptions, from par. 120 to 161, are based in the main on a summary of *Encyclopaedia Biblica,* Vol. V, Jerusalem, 1962, and its sources.)

161[*c*] *This order* To revert, in conclusion, to Josephus' evidence on the subject, D. Flusser notes that "other tendencious descriptions portrayed them, as it were, as Tolstoyan pacifists, or Jewish Buddhists, whereas the Dead Sea Scrolls, as noted, give us a far more realistic picture of their true nature: Their pacifism is conditional; they really hoped that they, as "Children of Light" would finally triumph over the "Children of Darkness"; their brotherly love related mainly to the members of their own community, while they had no love left for the outer world. In fact, some allusions to the nature of their doctrines is more manifest from a reading of Josephus *following* the discovery of the

The discharge of bowels

(148) On other days they dig a trench a foot deep with a mattock—for such is the kind of hatchet they give to the novices [*d*]—and wrapping their mantle around them, so as not to affront the rays of the sun [*e*], they squat over it: (149) then they put the excavated soil back in the hole. On these occasions they select the more retired spots, and though the discharge of the bowels is quite natural, they make it a rule to wash after it, as if defiled.

10. The four grades of admission

(150) They are divided into four grades [*a*], according to the duration of their training; and to such an extent are the juniors inferior to the seniors that if a senior is touched by a junior he must take a bath as though contaminated by an alien. (151) They are long-lived, most of them passing the century, owing to the simplicity and regularity of their daily life, I imagine. They despise danger and conquer pain by will-power; death, if it comes with honor, they prefer to an easy death.

Endurance to persecution

(152) Their spirit was tested to the utmost by the war with the Romans [*b*]. They racked, twisted, burnt and broke them, subjecting them to every instrument of torture in order to make them blaspheme their Lawgiver, or eat something forbidden. Yet they did not yield to either demand, nor ever once did they fawn on their tormentors or shed a tear. (153) Smiling in their agony and gently mocking their torturers, they cheerfully resigned their souls, confident that they would receive them back again.

11. The Essenes' belief in the immortality of the soul

(154) It is their unshakable conviction that bodies are corruptible and the material composing them impermanent, whereas the soul is immortal forever. Emanating from the most rarified ether they are trapped, as it were, in the prison house of the body, as if drawn down by one of nature's spells. (155) But when they are released from the bonds of the flesh, then, as though liberated from a long servitude, they rejoice and soar aloft. Holding, I believe, to the same conception as the Greeks, they declare that for the good souls there waits a home beyond the ocean, a place not troubled by rain or snow or heat, but refreshed by a gentle west wind blowing gently from the ocean, while they consign bad souls to a murky stormy abyss, full of punishments that know no end. (156) I imagine the Greeks had the same notion when they assigned to their brave men, whom they called heroes and demigods, the isles of the blessed [*a*] and to the souls of the wicked the place of the impious down in Hades, where, according to their mythology, certain people such as Sisyphus, Tantalus, Ixion and Tityus are

undergoing punishment. (157) Thus, they aimed, first, to establish that souls are immortal, and second, to promote virtue and discourage vice; since the good become better in their lifetime by the hope of a reward after death, and the ungovernable emotions of the wicked are restrained by the fear that, even though they escape detection in this life after their dissolution, they will undergo punishment. (158) Such then are the theological views of the Essenes about the soul [*b*], providing an inescapable inducement to those who have once tested their philosophy.

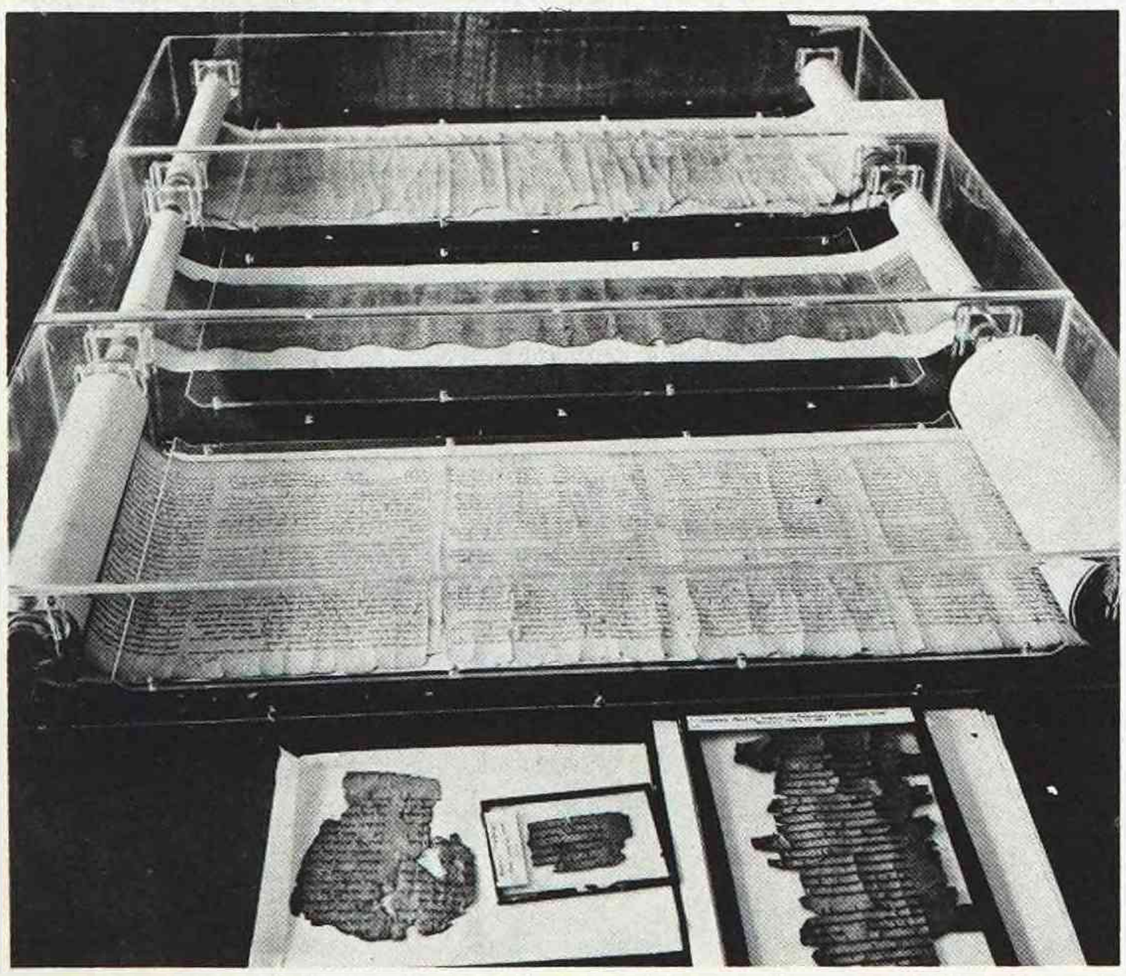
12. Their gift of prophecy

(159) Some of them claim to foretell the future as a result of a lifelong study of sacred writings, various forms of purification and the aphorisms of the prophets; rarely if ever do their predictions prove wrong [*a*].

13. (160) There is yet a second order of Essenes, which agrees with the other in its way of life, customs and regulations, but differs only in its views on marriage. They think that the most important thing in life—the propagation of the race—is forfeited by men who do not marry, and further, if everyone would agree with them, mankind would disappear rapidly. (161) However, they put their brides on probation for three years, and do not marry them till they have proven themselves capable of child-bearing after three periods of purification [*a*]. They have no intercourse with them during pregnancy, thus showing that they marry not for pleasure but for the begetting of children [*b*]. When the women bathe they wear a dress just as the men wear a loincloth. Such are the customs of this order [*c*].

14. The Pharisees

(162) Of the two schools named first, the Pharisees are held to be the most accurate interpreters of the laws and are the leading sect [*a*]. They attribute everything



Dead Sea Scrolls. It is therefore evident that commentators who have maintained in the past that Josephus' evidence about the Essenes was not reliable, were wrong; almost every item of his description of the Essenes can be explained, or substantiated, through an understanding of the scrolls.

162[*a*] *Pharisees and Pharisaism* Though himself a Pharisee, Josephus has very little to say about his own school of thought (or "philosophy"). Nevertheless, the abundance of the contemporary rabbinical interpreters of the Law, added to, or incorporated in the evidence from the Mishna and Talmud, provide us with a very clear picture of Pharisaism. Moreover, Josephus on many occasions stressed the "accuracy" and "exactitude" of the Pharisaic interpretation of the law, as in the present case. While it is true that the two leading contemporary religious tendencies—the Pharisees and Sadducees—each believed in the superiority of its own teachings, each identifying itself with the whole people, their political animosities, as we have seen, could rise to a high pitch and at times lead to open civil war. The Pharisees enjoyed the greater popularity and may be said to have represented the large majority of the nation. There are, however, misleading misconceptions relating to the Pharisees which we must proceed to expose at this junction. The idea that they were merely pietists, who made the whole life of the nation an instrument in the service of the Law (Torah) is disproved by the first dicta of the early Sages who lived in the time of the Second Temple, both in the field of Halakha (Code of regulations) and in their interpretation. Indeed, their acts, insofar as they are known to us from tradition, give further proof to the contrary. The regulations of the Pharisees are directed to the welfare and improvement of Jewish society, even involving at times the suppression of ancient rules of the Torah. Pharisaism embraces, besides religious precepts, basic principles in the sphere of law—both civil and criminal—as well as communal and state legislation, including ordinances affecting the monarchy. The previous chapters have shown how and why the Pharisees conflicted at times with certain Hasmonean kings, with Herod himself and with his successors. It must be stressed that the Law (Torah) is certainly the basis of Halakha, and both are validated by religion. In essence, Halakha and its spirit are compounded of the element of piety with the aim of improving every aspect of the civilized life of the nation as a whole. In fact, the secular element is dominant throughout. The image of the Pharisee leaders as we know them, either from Josephus or the works of the apostles—men like Simeon ben Shetah, Shemaiah and Avtalion, Gamaliel the Elder—show men who contrast sharply from "pietists." These distinguished personages are not all "holy men" who are isolated from the community and devote themselves to acts of piety. They give instruction in state laws and also participate in the political events of their time, although officially nonpoliticians. Moreover, "the Pharisees who represented the living ethnic body, could appropriately insist on the validity of the *oral law* as well. This represented the legal evolution of customs and beliefs which had slowly grown out of the imperceptible changes in national realities from generation to generation over a millennium. The Pharisees could acknowledge changes brought about through centuries of progressing life as parts of a living tradition, reconciling them with the written law, wherever necessary through a continuous reinterpretation of the Torah (the Law), rather than through a literal application of the ancient traditions" (S. L. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews,* II, p. 37, 1952).

In conclusion, by synthesizing traditions with the revealed words of Scripture, they acknowledged the supremacy of the time element, the life experience of the people, national evolution and history. The doctrine of man's eternal vigilance against the eruption of inimical spiritual powers, as well as the belief that the fathers of the nation and other holy men (and martyrs) intervene with God in favor of the people, had gained momentum through the growth in importance of the divine mediators in Pharisaic theology. (This doctrinal conflict is also mentioned in *Acts* 23, 8). Speaking empirically, the influence generated by the Pharisees in the coming years will be borne out by the events that followed in the next decades.

Dead Sea Scrolls unrolled at the Shrine of the Book, Jerusalem

to fate [*b*] and to God; (163) they hold that to do right or otherwise rests mainly with men, but in every action fate has its share. Every soul, they maintain, is immortal, but the soul of the good alone passes into another body [*c*], while the souls of the wicked suffer eternal punishment [*d*].

The Sadducees

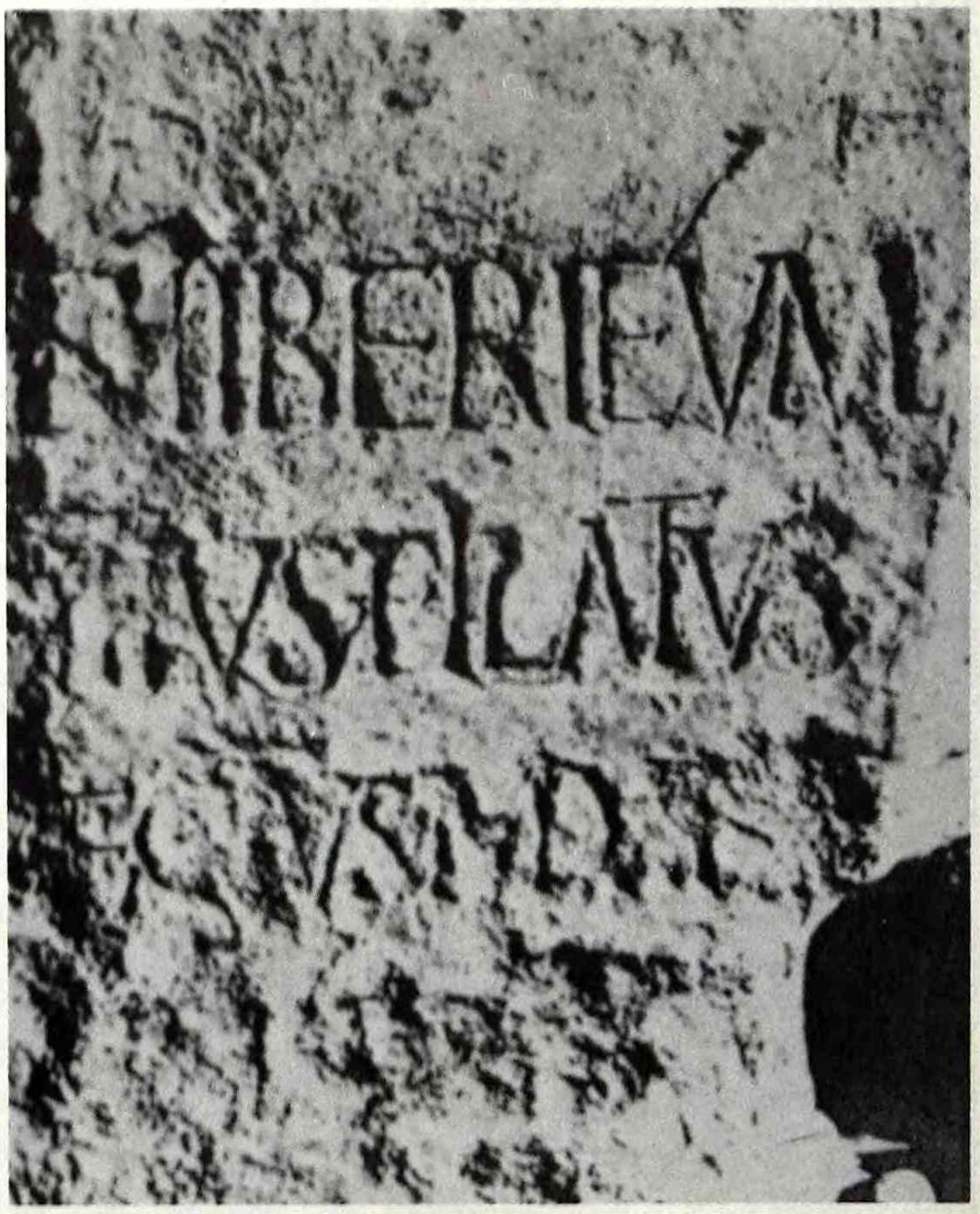
(164) The Sadducees, the second order, deny fate altogether and hold that God is incapable of either committing sin or seeing it. (165) They maintain that man has the choice of good and evil, and it rests with each individual to choose which he will follow [*e*]. They deny the immortality of the soul after death and penalties in the underworld and rewards [*e*]. (166) The Pharisees are friendly to one another and cultivate harmonious relations with the community [*f*]. The Sadducees, even towards each other, show a more disagreeable behavior, and in their relations with their peers [*g*] are as rude as to aliens. This is all I have to say on the Jewish schools of thought [*h*].

Chapter IX

1. The tetrarchs Philip and Herod Antipas

(167) When the ethnarchy of Archelaus was converted into a Roman province, the other princes, Philip and Herod surname Antipas, continued to rule

Pilate's dedication inscription in honor of Emperor Tiberius, found embedded in the Roman amphitheater of Caesarea. It carried Pilate's formal title praefectus *(prefect)*



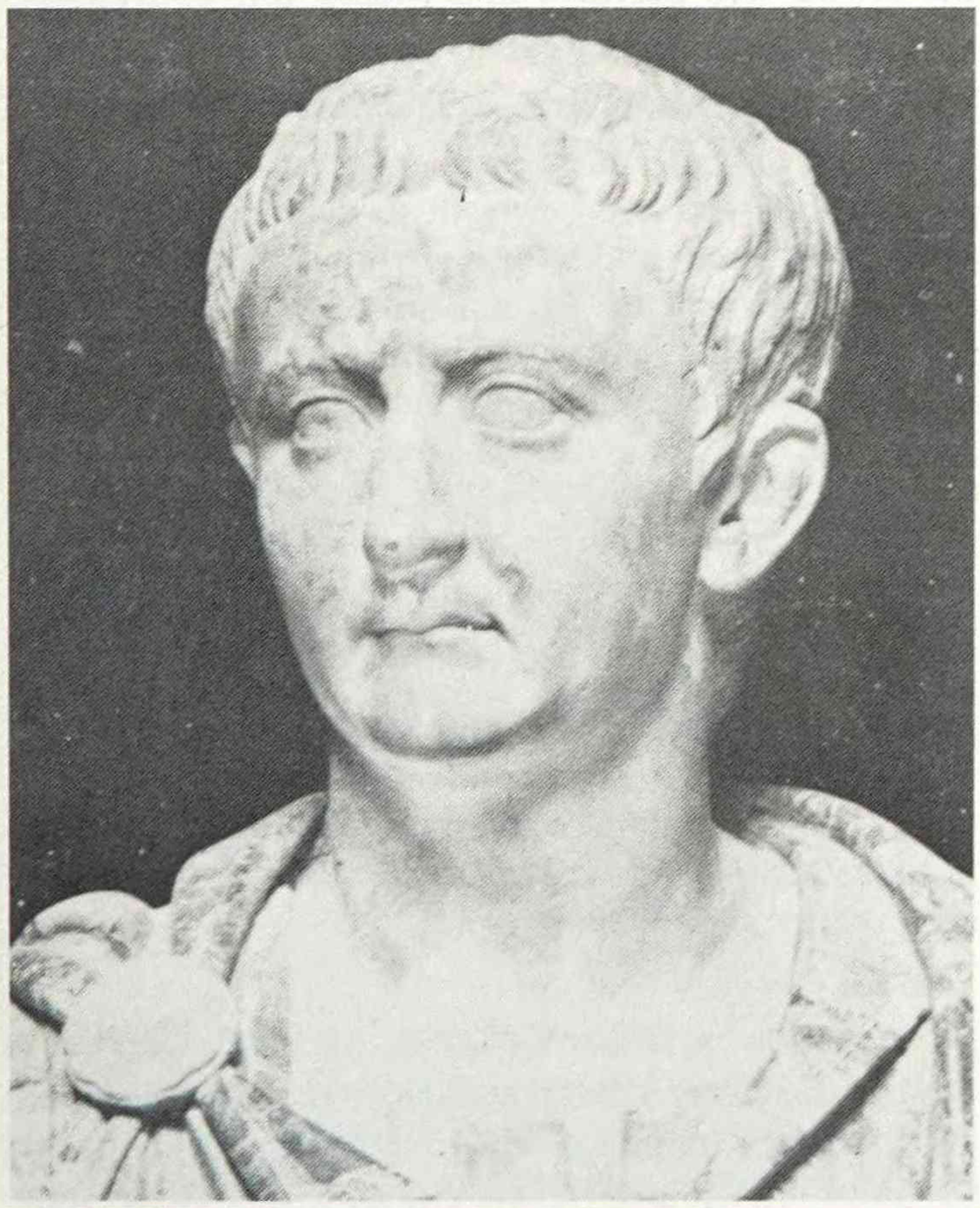
162[*b*] *Fate* for gentile readers is a substitute for Providence. According to the classic dictum of Rabbi Akiba "Everything is foreseen and freewill is given" as stated in the *Sayings of the Fathers* III, 15.
163[*c*] The doctrine of the reincarnation of the soul is expressed in more specific terms in *War* III, 374: "Their souls, remaining spotless and obedient, are allotted the most holy place in heaven, whence in the revolution of ages, they return to find in chaste bodies a new habitation."
163[*d*] *Punishment* Josephus, as a Pharisee, used the term "under the earth" for the benefit of his Greek readers, or as in this case "the darker regions of the nether world *(hades)* are assigned to the wicked" (*War* III, 372–375). In short we need no more telling expression of the Pharisaic worldly orientation, even in the popular doctrine of resurrection, than the ancient benediction of the daily *Amidah* prayer of Jews throughout the last two millennia 'thou art mighty, thou quickenest the dead and art powerful to save."
165[*e*] *The Sadducees* Sharp economic and social divisions added to the political controversies between the two parties. These "were so obvious as to overshadow the creedal disparity itself. Only the overwhelming religiosity of the age forced them to assume a religious definition or coloring and the fierceness of the struggle was intensified by the glow of sectarian fanaticism" (Baron, *ibid.*, p. 35). The Sadducees, who were representatives of the lay aristocracy and the priesthood had many reasons to resist the customs and the beliefs evolved by the masses under the leadership of the plebeian or middle-class intellectuals, namely the Pharisees and scribes. Even though the Pharisees were imbued with the lore concerning the hereafter and influenced by apocalyptic visionaries, especially after the Hasmonean revolt—who depicted graphically the delights of the new life granted the righteous and the humble. Such claims appeared preposterous to the Sadducees. Realists in public life, most of them were far too pragmatic to acquiesce in these popular yearnings. Since they did not find any reference to them in the revealed Law of Moses, they repudiated interpretations reading such pertinent hints into the scriptural texts. The Sadducees' negation of resurrection was inherent in their whole attitude, which reflected their peculiar political and social position. Many scholars question whether they were ready to admit the immortality of the soul—a teaching that was to them a Hellenistic heritage without scriptural support, and was probably also abhorrent to them.
166[*f*] *The Pharisees* (*P'rushim* in Hebrew) were separatists in the sense of isolating themselves from the foreign nations as well as from intimate contact with the *"ammei ha-aretz,"* i.e. common folk, many of whom were unlettered or did not adhere absolutely to the rabbinic regulations regarding certain laws. They were those concerning purity: separation from gentile uncleanliness, regulations relating to people who did not eat food levitically prepared, or people who were making vows. The Pharisees placed the nation's life within the halakhic framework expressed in the *Oral Law* which they regarded as no less vital than the Written Law (the Bible). They were organized in fraternities *(haburot)* that imposed on the membership more duties than rights, and particularly the most rigid observance of the Law. Despite the enormous literature written about the Pharisees by Jewish and Christian scholars, it is safe to avoid oversimplification in defining their origins and history. Generally speaking, Jewish orthodoxy (and the Karaite sect which has also evolved its own Oral Law) has identified itself for the last two millennia with the Pharisees; even Reform Judaism, too, sees in the movement a progressive and democratic current in the Jewish religion of the Mishnaic period, i.e. in the time of the Second Temple and the subsequent two centuries, when the Oral Law was codified in the *Mishna.*
166[*g*] *Their peers* Josephus lays stress on the Sadducees' blunt manner of address. This bluntness expressed itself in their contacts with the other sects and with other members of the community; this was due probably to the prevailing fanaticism, their economic and social position vis-à-vis the commoners and middle-class and other reasons that Josephus fails to specify. R. E. Brown calls attention in his commentary on *The Gospel According to John* (1966, p. 440), to the bluntness of Caiaphas, high priest in Pontius Pilate's time, in his address to his confreres, at an unofficial session over which he presided (John 11, 49–50) before Jesus' trial (see note 171[*d*]). Another reason may be sought in certain matters of legal precedure. Some litigants refused to be tried by pure Torah law, which rejected the interpretations or teachings

their respective tetrarchies. As for Salome, at her death she bequeathed her toparchy [*a*] to Julia, wife of Augustus, along with Jamnia [*a*] and the palmgroves of Phasaelis [*a*]. (168) After the death of Augustus who had directed the state for fifty-seven years, six months and two days, the Roman Empire passed to Tiberius, the son of Julia. On his accession, Herod and Philip continued to hold their tetrarchies and respectively founded cities: Philip built the city of Caesarea [*b*], near the sources of the Jordan in Paneas [*b*], and Julius in lower Gaulanitis [*c*]; Herod built Tiberias [*d*] in Galilee and a city called after Julia in Peraea [*e*].

2. The scandal of the standards during the prefecture of Pontius Pilate

(169) As prefect of Judaea [*a*], Tiberius sent Pilate, and he introduced into Jerusalem by night and under cover the effigies of Caesar which are called standards [*b*]. (170) When day dawned this caused great excitement among the Jews; for those who were near [*c*] were amazed at the sight and considered that their laws had been trampled on, as they do not permit any graven image to be set up in the city. As a result of the anger of the city people, the country people started moving and flocked together in crowds. (171) They rushed off to Pilate in Caesarea [*d*] and begged him to remove the standards from Jerusalem and respect their ancestral customs. When Pilate refused, they fell prone all around his house and remained motionless for five days and nights.

Bust of Emperor Tiberius (Capitoline Museum, Rome)



of the Sages, or Pharisees, somewhat after the manner of the Sadducees. This may also account for the "bluntness" attributed to Sadducee legal sentences. It appears that Jesus of Nazareth was very critical of the materialism of the Sadducees. One view—not from the Evangelical position—of his clash with their power center in Jerusalem is described in G. Cornfeld's *New Light on the Historical Jesus* (1982).

166[*h*] *"This is all – – – – – on the Jewish schools of thought"* This is not all that the author had in mind, for he amplifies his original statement in *Antiq.* XVIII, 23 where he mentions the *fourth philosophy,* namely the *Zealots* founded by Judas the Galilean (118[*g*]), the prime movers in the Great Revolt. Hence the above omission of this "Jewish school of thought" is probably a lapse generated by his deadly hatred of the Zealots, an attitude which colors his whole work.

167[*a*] *Salome's toparchy or territory* included Jamniah (Jabneh) in the coastal plain. Phasaelis (as well as Archelais, also mentioned in *Antiq.* XVII, 340) were in the Jordan Valley. Consequently, this former Jewish area was ceded back to Roman administration.

168[*b*] *Caesarea Philippi,* modern Banias, named after Paneas where a Hellenistic shrine to Pan had been erected; it was a well watered district. The city which was not founded originally on virgin ground was re-established on the remains of the former town.

168[*c*] *Gaulanitis and Julias,* or Beth-Saida, on the northeastern shore of the Lake of Galilee (a fishing village) in the Gaulan.

168[*d*] *Tiberias* named in honor of the emperor Tiberius.

168[*e*] The Peraean *Julias* also called *Beth-harampatha* (*War* II, 59) was situated east of the river Jordan facing Jericho, and named after the former empress Julia. The city was also called *Livias.*

169[*a*] *Prefect* Josephus' original may have rendered "prefect" instead of "procurator". The Greek used an anachronism here since Pontius Pilate was not "procurator" but "prefect" of Judaea. In the summer of 1961, an Italian archaeological expedition found a two-by-three-foot stone inscribed with Pilate's name and title as *praefectus Iudaeae*—the first epigraphic evidence of the existence of Pilate to be discovered. During the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, governors of Judaea were styled prefects, whereas from Claudius on they were named procurators. Josephus and even Tacitus (*Annals* XV, 44) simply use the later term for all Roman governors of Judaea. See illustration and inscription of the Pilate stone (*War* I, 415[*a*]).

169[*b*] These were badges of a Roman cohort bearing the image or medallion of the emperor *(imperatorum imagines)* which were attached to the standards. Although it may have been a deliberate insult, the incident may have been connected with a change in the garrison and the encampment of the cohort in Jerusalem.

170[*c*] The Jews came to the Temple area early in the morning in connection with the sacrifical ceremony performed after dawn.

171[*d*] *Caesarea* was the capital of the Roman province of Judaea. During the administration of Pontius Pilate (AD 26–36) relations between the Romans and the Jews deteriorated considerably and open friction ensued. Philo describes this administration as a harsh and corrupt regime. Pilate was disliked and angered the Jews because of his disregard of Jewish feeling (175[*b*]), his extortions and frequent executions of Jews without proper Jewish trial, according to Philo, whose evidence must, however, be used with caution. Josephus does not mention the trial of Jesus of Nazareth or his crucifixion, which is related in the Gospels and his name is mentioned in *Antiquities* (see Appendix; Testimonium Flavianum). The more direct historical evidence in this matter seems to emerge from John's Gospel where Caiaphas remarks to the priests, "It is to your interest that one man should die for the people, than that the whole nation should be destroyed by Rome" (John 11, 47–53). The deeds of Jesus had a public significance too. The Jewish leadership passed him over to the Romans who were the competent authority in matters involving public security and the execution of a death sentence. Pilate, who was a methodical and cold-blooded administrator, is said to have attempted to crush any sign of rebellion as soon as it arose. Furthermore, he is said to have off-handedly washed his hands of the affair and ordered the crucifixion of Jesus. The trial took place probably in April of AD 33.

During the first years of his administration, Pilate was not answerable to the Syrian legate, but in AD 35 the governor of Judaea was again overshadowed by the authority of Vitellius, the legate to Syria. Pilate's

imbroglio involved the massacre of some armed Samaritans who had gathered on Mt. Gerizim above Shechem (*Antiq.* XVIII, 87). The Council of Samaria naturally protested. Vitellius at once deprived Pilate of his office and sent him off to Rome to await trial.

172[*a*] Namely, the stadium of Caesarea. In the end Pilate yielded because he realized he had overreached himself and was liable to be confronted by a revolt.

175[*a*] *The scandal of the aqueduct* Although Pilate had yielded on the first occasion, he refused in this case to depart from what he regarded as the practice of his predecessors in using the sacred treasury *(corbanoth)* of the Temple for public works, and from what he felt did no damage to the Jewish religion. But this action was met with violent indignation on the part of the people who strongly resented the use of Temple funds for profane purposes, as this money was sacred and consecrated to the Temple sacrifices. The same episode is reported in greater detail by Josephus in *Antiq.* XVIII, 60, where the crowd's role in the riot is augmented. Surplus from the half-shekel Temple offerings *could* be used for the upkeep of the "city wall... and all the city's needs"—presumably including water supply (Talmud, *Shekalim* IV, 2).

175[*b*] The aqueduct referred to was the long lower aqueduct which brought water from Ain-Arrub in the hills of Hebron. "The network of aqueducts around Jerusalem is clear evidence of the continual efforts to maintain a regular water supply for the city... and the many literary sources and remains *in situ* indicate that... the lower aqueduct was in continuous use for a very lengthy period." (Mazar, *The Aqueducts of Jerusalem, Jerusalem Revealed,* p. 84, *ibid.*)

177[*c*] *Pilate's severity* This typical severity has been observed in Pilate's policy regarding the coins he minted in Judaea showing pagan symbols such as the *simpulum* or the *lituus*. His predecessors had taken care not to injure Jewish sensitivity when issuing coins and avoided using such symbols as were connected with pagan worship, or could possibly suggest idolatry. In subsequent years the coinage of Syria was renewed and that of Pilate discontinued. This is not an unimportant indication, for it is a clear testimony to Pilate's uncompromising personality and invalidates modern attempts to whitewash him. Pilate may, however, have been under the direction of Sejanus, Tiberias' anti-Semitic prefect of the Praetorian Guard, in his administration of Judaea and the issuance of coinage.

178[*a*] Herod Agrippa (M. Julius Agrippa) was a grandson of Herod (*War* I, 552), who had to flee for lack of money to pay his debts and, now prosperous, returned to Rome where we will meet him in 206.

178[*b*] This is related in greater detail in *Antiq.* XVIII, 126. This visit was made in the year before Tiberius died.

178[*c*] Gaius (Caligula), the future emperor.

180[*d*] According to *Antiq.* XVIII, 168, this was Eutychus, his charioteer and freedman, and the words were spoken during a drive, not at dinner.

180[*e*] The reign lasted from Aug. 19, AD 14 to March 16, AD 37.

181[*a*] Philip died in AD 34, in the 20th year of Tiberius' reign.

181[*b*] *Herod Agrippa* took possession of his kingdom in AD 37, (pars. 181-183 corresponding with *Antiq.* XVIII, 240-255). He was made king of Auranitis (present Hauran) and adjacent territories east of the Jordan, which had once formed the northeastern portion of King Herod's kingdom, and who had then passed them to his son, the tetrarch Philip, on whose death they were incorporated temporarily into the province of Syria. Agrippa's domain was further increased by the tetrarchy of Abilene east of Lebanon and three years later, by the addition of Galilee and Peraea, the tetrarchy of his brother-in-law, Herod Antipas.

182[*c*] Herodias was the sister of Agrippa and wife of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea, who resented her brother's rise to power. The Gospels tell of her involvement in the death of John the Baptist (Mark 6, 17; Matthew 14, 3).

183[*d*] *Herod Antipas' transgressions and deposition* He was accused before the emperor of having amassed a store of arms for use against Rome in an alliance with Parthia. According to the later *Antiq.* XVIII, 251 he was banished to Gaul rather than Spain, which is not a large discrepancy, since the town cited, Lugdunum Convenarum, lies near the Pyrenees and the Spanish border. His realm was added to the kingdom of Agrippa (181–183).

3. (172) The next day Pilate took his seat on the tribunal in the great stadium [*a*] and summoned the mob as if he wanted to answer them. Instead he gave a prearranged signal to his soldiers to surround the Jews; (173) while the troops formed a ring three deep, the Jews were dumbfounded at this unexpected sight. Pilate declared that he would cut them to pieces unless they accepted the images of Caesar and nodded to the soldiers to draw their swords. (174) At this the Jews, as by concerted action, flung themselves to the ground in a body and bent their necks, shouting that they were ready to be killed rather than transgress their Law. Amazed at the intensity of their religious fervor, Pilate ordered the immediate removal of the standards from Jerusalem.

4. The aqueduct scandal

(175) On a later occasion, he stirred up further trouble by expending the sacred treasure known as "Corbonas," upon the construction of an aqueduct [*a*] which brought the water from a distance of 400 furlongs [*b*]. The people were infuriated at this, and when Pilate visited Jerusalem, they surrounded his tribunal with angry protests. (176) But he had foreseen the tumult, and had made the soldiers mix with the crowd wearing their civilian clothing over their armor, and with orders not to draw their swords, but to beat the rioters with clubs. He now gave the agreed signal from the tribunal (177) and the Jews were cudgelled, so that large numbers died from the blows and many were trampled to death by their friends in the ensuing flight. Cowed by the fate of the victims, the crowd was horrified into silence [*c*].

5. Herod Agrippa's visit to Tiberius

(178) At about this time Agrippa, son of the Aristobulus who had been put to death by his father Herod [*a*], sought an audience with Tiberius in order to accuse Herod the tetrarch [*b*]. When the emperor rejected the charge, he remained in Rome, and made approaches to many eminent men and in particular to Gaius [*c*], son of Germanicus, as yet a private citizen. (179) One day when he was entertaining him at dinner, Agrippa, paying him various compliments, finished by stretching out his hands to heaven and openly praying that Tiberius might die soon, so that he could see Gaius lord of the world. (180) This was reported to Tiberius by one of the domestics [*d*], whereupon the emperor, in anger, had Agrippa locked up and subjected him to maltreatment for six months, until his own death. He had reigned twenty-two years, six months and three days [*e*].

6. Accession of Gaius Caligula; Agrippa's liberation

(181) After being proclaimed emperor, Gaius released Agrippa, and set him as king over the tetrarchy of the deceased Philip [*a*]. When Agrippa arrived to take

possession of the kingdom [*b*], envy and ambition was aroused in Herod the tetrarch.

The end of Philip and Herod Antipas' career

(182) Herod's hopes of a crown were inspired chiefly by his wife Herodias [*c*], who instigated the tetrarch to aspire to a throne. She reproached him for his indolence and declared that only his unwillingness to make the sea journey to Ceasar prevented him acquiring greater power. "Now that he has made a king of Agrippa, a mere commoner," said she, "the emperor would not hesitate to promote Herod who was already a tetrarch." (183) Yielding to this pressure, Herod Antipas came to Gaius, who punished his cupidity by banishing him to Spain [*d*]. For he had been followed by Agrippa [*e*] who brought accusations against him and received from Gaius Herod's tetrarchy. Herod died in Spain where his wife shared his exile [*e*].

Chapter X

1. Caligula's order to erect his statue in the Temple

(184) Gaius Caesar displayed such insolence at his accession to power that he wished to be thought of and addressed as a god [*a*]; he stripped his country of its noblest men and even proceeded to lay sacrilegious hands on Judaea. (185) Indeed, he sent Petronius with an army to Jerusalem to install statues of himself in the Temple [*b*]; if the Jews refused them he was to execute the objectors and to reduce the whole nation to slavery. (186) But God took note of these instructions

Caligula; statue found in Pompei (National Museum, Rome)

183[*e*] *Antipas' exile and sin* Josephus' version in *Antiq.* XVIII, 109–251, as well as the New Testament Synoptic version on Herod Antipas throw a different light on the course of events. Antipas had divorced the daughter of the Nabataean King Aretas and married his niece Herodias. Therupon the Nabatean wife fled to her father near Machaerus, near the Nabataean territory. This is how Machaerus is bought into the story. The wedlock of uncle and niece, while her first husband, who was also her uncle, was yet alive, flouted a biblical law of purity "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife" (Leviticus 18, 16). It resulted in human tragedy and political disaster. The unholy marriage aroused the fearless public protest of John the Baptist who told Herod Antipas: "...It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife. And Herodias set herself against him and desired to kill him; and she could not, for Herod feared the influence of John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man (with a large following of his own) and kept him safe" (Mark 6, 18–20). Finally, Herod imprisoned John in one of the dungeons, possibly at Machaerus, and succumbed to Herodias. In a probably drunken moment, Herod Antipas promised to accede to any request of her voluptuous daughter, Salome, who had performed dance in front of him and his jaded company at a banquet. Through this device, adamant in her insistence on the fulfillment of his word, Herodias secured the beheading of the holy man who had dared to denounce the indecency of her nuptials. The taboos of consanguinity or the vows of marriage seemed to matter little to her unbridled lust and insatiable ambition. Thus far the version of the Synoptics (Mark 6, 22–29; Luke 9, 7–9; Matt. 14, 6–12). It appears, according to D. Flusser, that John was killed in a dungeon of Antipas in Tiberias and not at Machaerus.

The ensuing political disaster: The murder of John was overshadowed for Herod Antipas and Herodias by the political disaster which befell them. Spurred on by his wife's consuming jealousy for the title of king granted by imperial command to her brother-in-law, Agrippa, whom he had aided materially in earlier days, outdistanced in his territory while he remained tetrarch—Antipas could contain himself no longer. He journeyed to Rome to petition for a similar elevation in rank. Informed of his purpose and anxious to prevent it, the ungrateful relative and brother-in-law had managed to harden Emperor Caligula's ear against him through false accusations of treachery. Despite all protestations of loyalty, Herod Antipas was sentenced to permanent exile (AD 39) in Lyons, in the distant Transalpine Gaul. Herodias joined him there, probably through lack of choice, in lasting exile. She had reared the edifice of her life with insatiable ambitions, to discover in the end that neither political intrigue nor savage spite could secure her the position and power she hungered for. They eluded her despite her fierce drive, brilliance and seductive beauty. Herod Antipas' tetrarchy of Galilee and Peraea was added to the neighboring Batanaea and Trachonitis (see map), which his maligner had inherited from another uncle, whose name was Herod Philip. The latter's name is reflected in that of the city of Caesarea Philippi or ancient Paneas. Paneas, located at one of the sources of the Jordan, was rebuilt and made the capital of his tetrarchy. The Gospels mention it as one of the cities visited by Jesus and his disciples. (Matt. 16, 13; Mark 8, 27).

184[*a*] *Caligula's decrees* The first two years of Caligula's reign pointed to a continuation of Emperor Tiberius' clemency towards the Jews, but a basic change in Judaeo-Roman relations followed Caligula's attempt to establish a cult of his own divinity, which he regarded with the fanaticism of a true believer.

185[*b*] The Jews of Jamnia (Yabneh) on the southern coast of Palestine, had in AD 40 smashed a stone erected by the Gentiles of that city on which to offer sacrifices to the emperor (as to a god). When this was reported to Caligula, he vowed to teach the Jews a lesson, namely to erect a colossal statue in the Jerusalem sanctuary.

186[*c*] It would be possible to implement such a decree only by the use of the Roman army, that is, by sending an additional three legions and Syrian auxiliaries to reinforce the local garrisons to overcome the expected hostility of the Jews. The project was therefore placed in the hands of *Publius Petronius,* legate of Syria, who marched on Judaea. When he reached Ptolemais he was met by the massed Jewish delegation.

as the sequel showed [*c*]. Petronius with three legions [*c*], and a large contingent of Syrian auxiliaries, began a swift march from Antioch to Judaea. (187) Some of the Jews disbelieved the rumors of war; others who did believe saw no means to defend themselves. Alarm soon became universal, for the army had already reached Ptolemais.

2. Description of Ptolemais and its vitreous sand

(188) Ptolemais [*a*] is a seaside town of Galilee, built close by the Great Plain [*b*] and surrounded by mountains. To the east 60 furlongs away [*c*] is the Galilean range; to the south, 120 furlongs away [*d*] is Carmel; to the north, 100 furlongs [*e*] is the highest range, called "The Ladder of Tyre" by the natives. (189) About a distance of two furlongs from the town flows the tiny Beleus stream [*f*] on whose banks is the Tomb of Memnon [*g*]. (190) Nearby is an unusual site a hundred cubits [*h*] wide which is of great interest; it is a round basin which yields crystalline sand. A large number of boats put in and clear this out, whereupon it is filled up again thanks to the winds, which, as if on purpose, blow into it common sand from outside; this is promptly converted by the mine into crystalline matter. (191) Still more wonderful, I think, is the fact that crystal which overflows from the basin reverts to ordinary sand. This is indeed a most unusual spot [*i*].

3. The Jews' petition of Petronius

(192) The Jews with their wives and children massed in the plain of Ptolemais and appealed to Petronius first on behalf of their ancestral laws [*a*] and then for themselves. He yielded to the demands of such a vast multitude and left the statues and his troops in Ptolemais. (193) He advanced into Galilee, where he summoned the people with all the notables to Tiberias. There he emphasized the power of Rome and the threats of Caesar. He demonstrated too the unreasonableness of their demands; (194) since all the subject races had set up statues of Caesar in their cities among those of their other gods, for the Jews alone to object to this was tantamount to rebellion, aggravated by insult.

4. The supreme price they offered to pay

(195) When the Jews pleaded their Law and ancestral customs, and explained that it was not permissible for a graven image of God, let alone of a man, to be placed not only in their sanctuary but even in any ordinary place in the country, Petronius retorted: "But I, too, am bound to keep the law of my sovereign; if I transgress it and spare you, I shall be put to death as I deserve. He who sent me will make war on you, not I. I, too, just as you, am subject to authority." (196) At this the crowd cried that they were ready to suffer anything for their Law. When he had been able to restrain their cries, Petronius asked: "Will you then go to war with Caesar?" (197) The Jews replied that for

188[*a*] Ptolemais, or Acre (67), a Hellenistic seaport in northwestern Palestine, was not regarded as a part of the province of Galilee which was populated mainly by Jews.

188[*b*] The Plain of Jezreel.

188[*c*] Seven miles.

188[*d*] Fifteen miles.

188[*e*] Twelve miles.

189[*f*] Half a mile away is the river Kishon.

189[*g*] Unknown.

190[*h*] Nearby is the sandy area fifty meters wide.

191[*i*] The digressions on Ptolomais crystalline sand was Josephus' way of explaining why the pure sand which was deposited in certain pools near the beach contained the superior crystalline sand used for glass making in which this town, as well as other Phoenician maritime towns, had specialized for many centuries.

192[*a*] The ancestral laws of the Jews had been ratified since Hellenistic times and later were promulgated by the Emperor Augustus.

200[*a*] *Petronius defies Caligula* The Jews left Petronius with no doubt that the imperial decrees could not be implemented without wholesale slaughter, he having witnessed the same scenes of desperation both in Ptolemais and Tiberias. The people had left their fields at the height of the sowing season (the autumn of AD 40). For fifty days the people besought Petronius to prevent the desecration of the Temple. He realized that he was not faced this time by an extremist or Zealot movement, but by the united front of all the Jews, including influential members of Herod's family. Petronius, who was already hesitant, now bowed to the determination of the people; he had to find ways of delaying the carrying out of the decree, thereby braving the anger of the emperor. Caligula seemed to have agreed to a temporary postponement until after the end of the agricultural season. Meanwhile, Agrippa I used all his influence in Rome and his persuasion on his friend, the emperor, to change the severe decree, and he may have procured certain concessions from Caligula. However, the ultimate aim was not averted, for the emperor intended to have a statue prepared in Rome and shipped to Judaea in time for his planned visit to Alexandria and Judaea. On the other hand, Petronius had lost favor with the emperor and had been advised to commit suicide (203). It was plain that sooner or later the crisis would recur and that it would give rise to a general insurrection. This catastrophe was not averted until the eve of the assassination of Caligula in January AD 41. These later conferences were held at Tiberias, according to *Antiq.* XVIII, 269. Meanwhile, Petronius, realizing the gravity of the situation, advised the workers at Sidon (Phoenicia), where the statue was to be made, to take their time. Whether Caligula had been influenced or not by other interventions, he changed his mind, deciding on a visit to Alexandria and Egypt in order to manifest his divinity (184[*a*]).

202[*b*] *Philo's explanation of Petronius' action (in Legatio ad Gaium, XXXI)* is not based on humanitarian grounds as stated by Josephus, but also and mainly because of his apprehension of what the fanatic zeal of the people for the Law (Torah) would lead them to, and more especially, considering his first-hand knowledge, as governor of Syria, of how the multitude in the Roman Diaspora and particularly the Jews across the Euphrates, namely Parthia, would react. A war in Judaea might involve an attack in the rear by the Babylonian (Parthian) Jews. Philo himself had tried to intervene with Caligula by heading a delegation to Rome. (This development is dealt with in more detail in *Antiq.* XVIII.) Other modern authorities believe that, in keeping with Caligula's character, he would not wait a year from AD 39 before taking action in 40. They would rather fit the interchange of despatches between Petronius and Caligula into the period between the summer of 40 and March of AD 41 when Petronius got news of Caligula's murder. On January 24, AD 41, Caligula was killed by a group of conspirators, and Jewry was released from fear.

203[*c*] The end of the summer and the fall are stormy seasons in the Mediterranean.

203[*d*] See note 200[*a*] above for comments on the probable course of events. In conclusion: It was plain that sooner or later the crisis in Judaeo–Roman relations would recur and that it would give rise to armed opposition, or even general insurrection, in the Orient. This was averted by Caligula's assassination. The memory of Caligula's decrees

Caesar and the people of Rome they sacrificed twice a day. If he wished, however, to set up the images in their midst he must first sacrifice the whole Jewish race; they were ready to offer themselves as victims with their wives and children. (198) This reply filled Petronius with wonder and pity for the unparalleled devotion of this people to their religion and the courage that made them so ready to die. So for the time being they were dismissed with nothing settled.

5. Petronius' bold decision and Gaius' death

(199) During the next few days he gathered the leading men privately and assembled the people publicly, using both entreaty and advice. But for the most part he had recourse to threats, emphasizing the might of Rome, the fury of Gaius, and the necessity imposed on himself. (200) As none of his efforts had any effect, and as he saw that the land was in danger of remaining unsown for it was at seedtime that the crowds had spent fifty days [*a*] in idleness waiting upon him—he called them together and said: (201) "It is better for me to take the risk. Either with God's help I shall convince Caesar and have the satisfaction of saving myself as well as you; or, if he is exasperated, I will be ready to give my life to save so many." Then he dismissed the throng, who rained blessings on his head, collected his army and returned from Ptolemais to Antioch. (202) From there, he hastened to report to Caesar, informing him of his campaign in Judaea and the appeals of the nation, and adding that unless he wished to destroy both the men and the land [*b*] he must respect their law and revoke the order. (203) To this dispatch Gaius replied in no gentle terms, threatening Petronius with death for his tardiness in carrying out his orders. But as it happened the bearers of this message were held up for three months by storms at sea [*c*] while others who brought the news of Gaius' death had a good voyage. Therefore Petronius received information of this event twenty-seven days earlier than the letter conveying his death-warrant [*d*].

Chapter XI

1. Accession of Emperor Claudius

(204) When, after a reign of three years and eight months [*a*], Gaius was assassinated [*b*], the troops in Rome [*c*] forced the empire on Claudius. (205) However, the Senate, on the motion of the consuls Sentius Saturninus and Pomponius Secundus ordered the three remaining cohorts that were loyal to them to protect the city [*d*]. They assembled in the Capitol, where in view of the savagery of Gaius they voted to take military action against Claudius; they were determined either to restore the aristocracy [*e*] as they had been governed formerly, or to elect by vote a leader worthy to be emperor.

and the fear of a renewed threat of similar calamities henceforth cast a shadow on Judaeo-Roman relations. Unparalleled in ancient history, they lacked even the political motives of Antiochus Epiphanes (*War* I, 31–38). Thus the aberration of a dictator 'who subjugated a multitude of nations,' coupled with his unlimited self-assurance in a divine power which surpassed that of other gods—exposed the threat facing Jewry even in Judaea itself. Tacitus in his *Annals* XII, 54, 1 expressed the opinion that the fear remained that yet another emperor would issue a similar decree.

204[*a*] More precisely, three years and ten months.

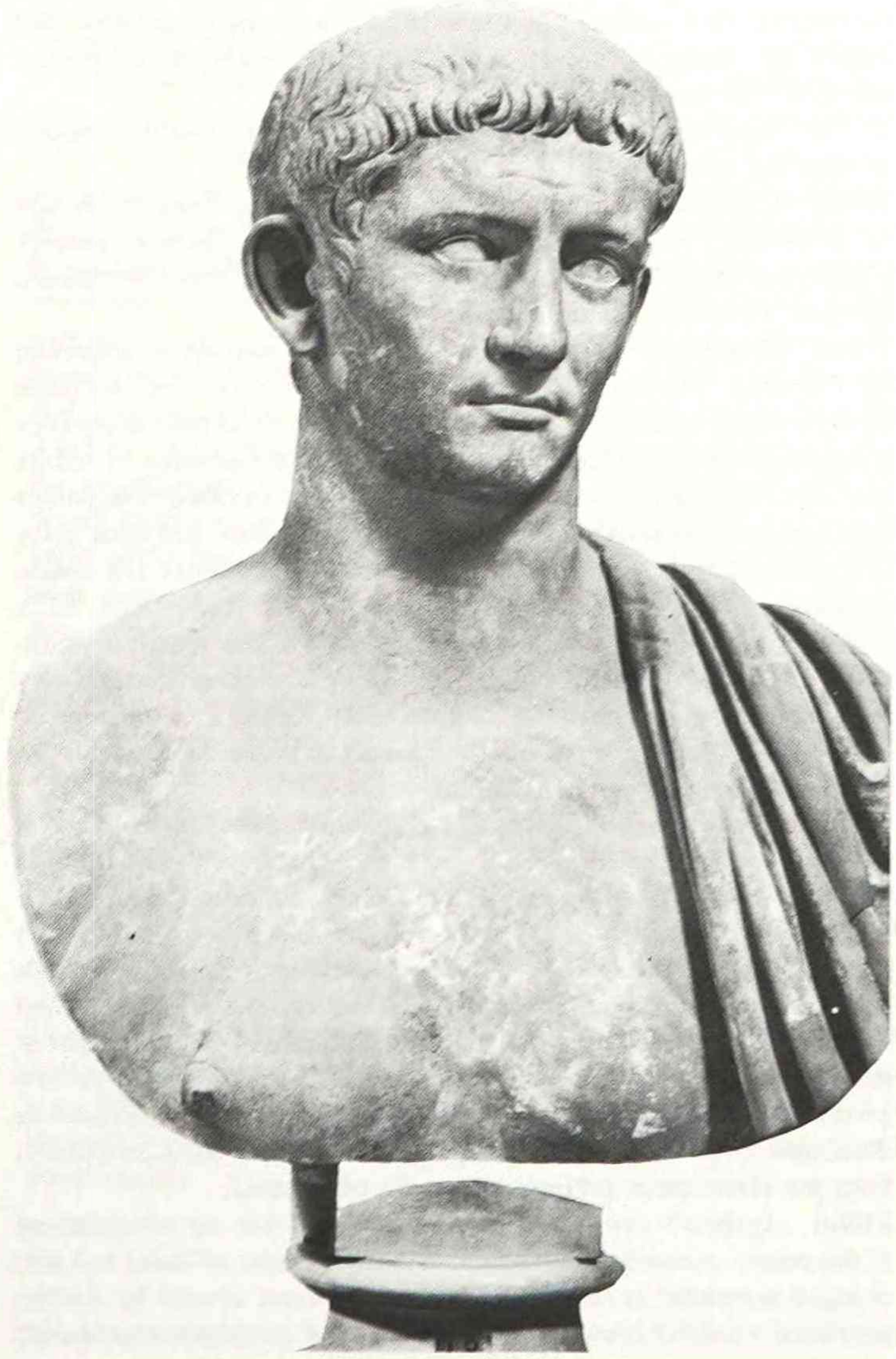
204[*b*] *The story of Caligula's assassination* fills many pages in *Antiq.* XIX. It was followed by confusion and license in Rome. The emperor's excesses had given rise to second thoughts about the final results of the Principate (rule) of Augustus, occasioned as it was on a scheme of family succession. The Senate considered seriously whether the Principate, namely, a rule of the early emperors which retained some republican forms, should be continued. However at that time the Senate was also not master of the situation.

204[*c*] They were the Praetorian Guard and they represented a potent factor in protecting the emperor and maintaining the balance of power in the overpopulated and volatile capital.

205[*d*] According to *Antiq.* XIX, 188 there were four cohorts, not three. These cohorts were *not* of the Praetorian Guard, but were Urban Cohorts under the command of the Urban Prefect of Rome. They subsequently defected to Claudius.

205[*e*] *Aristocracy* The two senators were bent on liberty and a restoration of the Republic, while others thought of abolishing the Julian dynasty if not the whole hierarchy of the Principate. The danger of open strife and bloodshed was imminent.

Claudius (Vatican Museum, Rome)



206[*a*] *Agrippa I in Rome* Following an earlier checkered career (cf. 181[*b*]), King Agrippa, thanks to Caligula's aid and the acquisition of new territories to his domain in Palestine, was now very influential at the Roman court. He was thoroughly familiar with every aspect of Roman society and of imperial government, and was regarded as a member of the Roman upper class. This contrasted with the hatred which the Greeks of Alexandria entertained for him for reasons of their own, among which were anti-Semitism, which figured fairly prominently, as well as the fact that he kept Jewish welfare in Palestine and the Diaspora always in mind. Agrippa, who happened to be in Rome at the time of Caligula's assassination, chose a course of action which was of the utmost consequence for the future of the Roman state. At the same time, he saw a chance of reaping an even richer harvest than he had from Caligula's accession in former years.

206[*b*] *Claudius and the military in Rome* The figure of Claudius has been popularized in Robert Grave's *I Claudius,* and its subsequent television adaption. This new *princeps* was in his fiftieth year when "Fortune" projected him into the foreground. Despised by his own mother and family as an invalid and a sot—infantile paralysis in some form left its mark upon his frame—he had an ungainly gait, weak feet, a shaking head and various speech defects. But he was deeply read and wrote voluminously on historical subjects. Amid the confusion that followed Caligula's murder, some Praetorians actually found Claudius in hiding, recognized him as brother to the popular hero Germanicus and of imperial descent, and hurried him to their camp to acclaim him as Imperator. The Senate thought to bully him out of it, and sent an embassy bidding him to return to them. The fact was that the Senate was not unified. The mob shouted for a *princeps,* and the Urban Cohorts (mentioned above), who at first protected the Senate, soon joined with the Praetorians, thus ensuring Claudius, already a popular figure among the military at Rome and Agrippa's friend, as the candidate for the supreme position.

208[*c*]–211[*a*] *Claudius recognized by the Senate:* On January 25, escorted by the Praetorians, to whom he gave a handsome donative, and helped by Agrippa's clever maneuvering, he managed to prevent bloodshed, as related in the text.

213[*b*] Referring to courtiers who had been quicker than the senators to back the winning side.

214[*a*] Claudius was duly recognized by the Senate, received the title of Imperator Augustus and *pontifex maximus* (highest pontiff). Henceforth, under the name of Tiberius Claudius Augustus Germanicus, he ruled the empire for nearly fourteen years.

215[*b*] *Grandfather's kingdom* His success was suitably recompensed by Claudius. Previously, he had managed to retain his kingdom throughout the whole of Gaius' reign. Now in AD 41 he had his territory greatly increased to include all the national (Roman) province of Judaea (Judaea proper, Idumaea and Samaria) plus the provinces of Trachonitis and Auranitis (Hauran), northeast of Palestine which had been given to Herod (*War* I, 398) and the principality of Lysanias (i.e. Abila, northwest of Damascus and part of Lebanon, cf. *Antiq.* XIX, 237). Claudius also confirmed Augustus' former gifts to the Jewish dynasty.

216[*c*] The ties between Claudius and Agrippa received official confirmation at the *Roman forum* in the ceremonial signing of a treaty of alliance. They appeared together at the Senate to thank the assembly for the kindness shown them (*Antiq.* XIX, 274-275).

217[*d*] Claudius now continued to maintain these allied kings in various parts of the Roman Empire. Hence, Agrippa's elder brother, Herod was appointed king of Chalcis in Lebanon. As a result, the former Roman province called *Judaea* was now abolished through Agrippa's perseverance and diplomacy. This fact was acknowledged with pride both by the Jews in Palestine and the Diaspora. The Jewish kingdom was restored with dimensions similar to the domain of Herod (or that of the Hasmonean kings at the height of their power). Agrippa also derived general support not merely on account of his deeds, but also because he descended both from the Herodian dynasty as well as, matrilineally, from the Hasmonean princess whom Herod married.

218[*a*] *Agrippa's treasury* Agrippa's chief aim was the advancement of the people. According to modern historians, Jewish attitudes had also changed somewhat in the thirty-five years of direct control by Roman provincial administrations. Apparently, most of the people had learned

2. Agrippa as mediator between Claudius and the Senate

(206) Agrippa was at this time in Rome [*a*] and, as chance would have it, he was invited by the Senate for consultation and at the same time he was summoned by Claudius to the camp [*b*]; both parties soliciting his service in this emergency. Realizing that Claudius was virtually emperor already with all the power at his back, Agrippa went to him. Thereupon Claudius dispatched him as ambassador to inform the Senate of his intentions. (207) In the first place, he was to explain, that he had been carried off by the soldiers against his will, and he felt that to disregard their enthusiasm would be unfair, and to disregard his own future, unsafe; for the mere fact that he had been summoned to the imperial title placed him in danger. (208) Agrippa was further to state that he would govern the empire like a good leader, not like a tyrant; he would be satisfied with the honor of the imperial title and on every matter at issue he would follow the wishes of the people [*c*]. Indeed, if he had not been a moderate man by inclination, the fate of Gaius would serve as an example for him to act with self-restraint [*c*].

3. (209) To this message, delivered by Agrippa, the Senate answered that they relied on the army and on their own wise resolutions and would not submit to voluntary slavery. When Claudius heard this answer of the Senate, he sent Agrippa back to inform them that he would never consent to betray those who had sworn fidelity to him, and that he must therefore fight, though most unwillingly, against those who should have been his best friends. (210) However, it would be necessary to choose a battlefield outside the city; for it would be sacrilege if by their obstinate perversity they should contaminate their ancestral shrines with the blood of their countrymen. Agrippa accordingly delivered this message to the Senate.

4. (211) In the course of these negotiations one of the soldiers who was loyal to the Senate [*a*] drew his sword and cried out: "Comrades in arms, why should we think of killing our brothers and attacking our kinsmen who happen to be with Claudius? We have an emperor with whom we find no fault and are united by such close ties with those against whom we are proposing to march." (212) With these words he strode through the midst of the Senate with all his fellow soldiers behind him. Left in the lurch, the patricians were dismayed; then, finding no other means of escape, they followed the soldiers and hurried off to join Claudius. (213) But outside the walls they found themselves faced by the naked swords of hot-headed courtiers of fortune [*b*] who had been quicker than they. The leaders of the party, who led the way might have been in danger before Claudius was aware of the soldiers' violence, had not Agrippa run and told him of the dangerous situation, pointing out that unless he

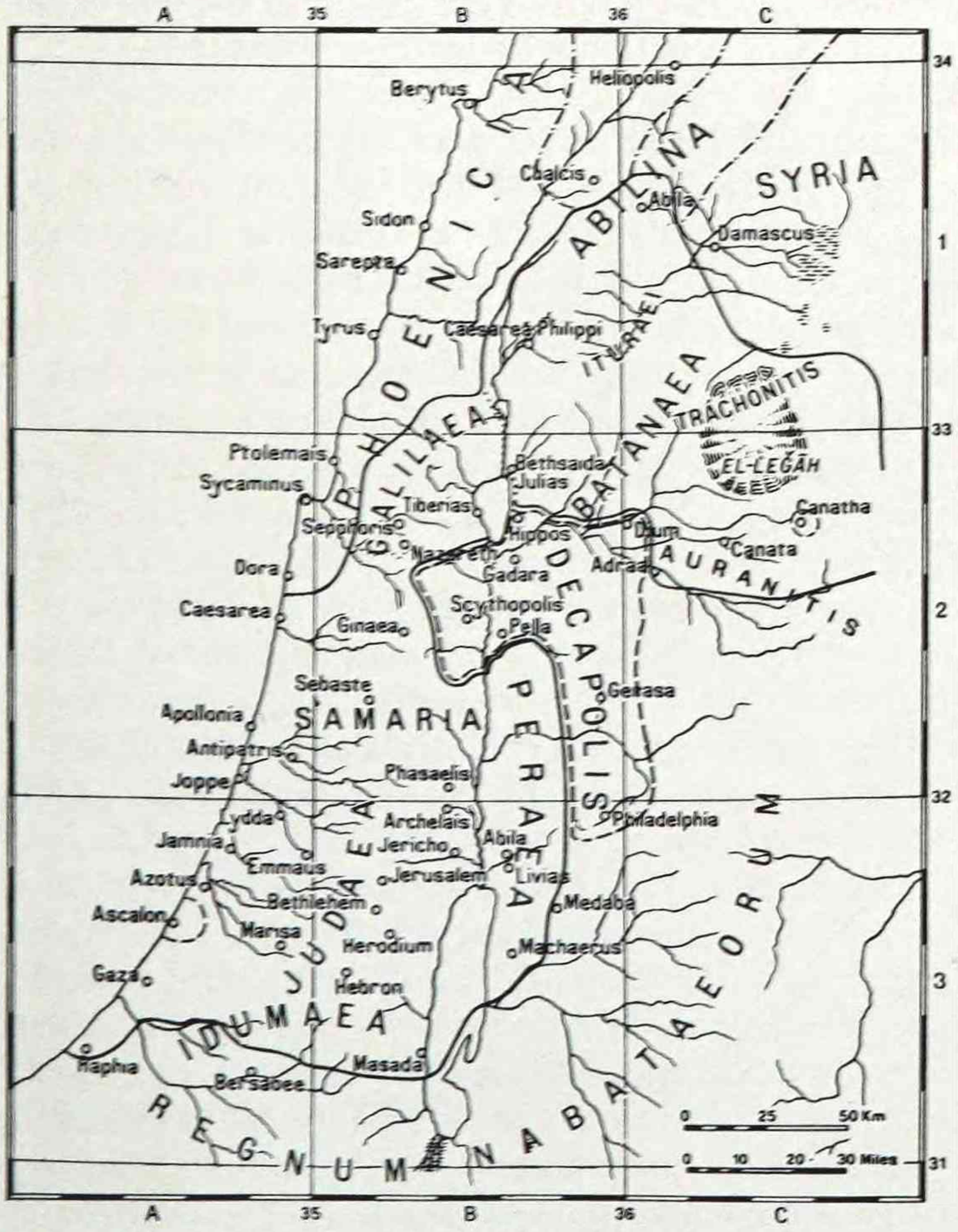
restrained the impetuosity of the troops who were furious with the patricians, he would lose the very people who could make his reign glorious and find himself ruler of a wilderness.

5. Agrippa I recompensed and made king of Judaea

(214) When Claudius heard this, he put a stop to the violent behavior of the soldiers and received the senators in the camp [*a*], making them welcome and then immediately going out with them to sacrifice offerings of thanks to God for his accession [*a*]. (215) He forthwith conferred upon Agrippa the whole of his grandfather's kingdom [*b*], adding to it beyond these borders not only the outer districts of Trachonitis and Auranitis given by Augustus to Herod [*b*], but a further principality known as the Kingdom of Lysanias [*b*]. (216) He informed the people of this donation by an edict, and ordered the magistrates to engrave the award on bronze tablets to be deposited in the Capitol [*c*]. (217) He also bestowed on Agrippa's brother Herod—who was at the same time his son-in-law by his marriage with Bernice—the Kingdom of Chalcis [*d*].

6. The reign of Agrippa I; the third wall of Jerusalem and the reduction of Judaea to a province

(218) From so extensive a realm wealth poured into Agrippa's treasury [*a*], which he was not long in emptying. For he began to surround Jerusalem with a wall [*b*] so huge that had it been completed, it would have



The kingdom of King Agrippa I

to be satisfied with a Jewish king, if only a semi-independent one, after their accumulated experience of Roman provincial rule, especially the oppression and tensions under the prefecture of Pontius Pilate and the terrifying years of Caligula's reign. The past had taught them a degree of moderation and most people, led by the Pharisees, were now willing to accede to certain of Agrippa's acts which would have invited anger and scorn in the days of king Herod. He called himself *Philokaisar* (lover of Caesar) and *Philoromanus* (lover of Romans) on his coins and inscriptions; he made magnificent gifts to Berytus (Beirut), a Gentile city, yet managed to keep on good terms with his Jewish population and the priesthood, by whom his memory was treasured after his death, as can be witnessed by Talmudic passages.

218[*b*] *The expansion of Jerusalem and the Third Wall* Driven by his ambitious plans for his people, the king drew heavily both on the country's treasury and the Temple treasury to refortify the expanding capital and its new suburbs in the northwest and north, namely, by building a new strategic city wall worthy of Herod's architectural genius. This helped to link and reinforce the former walls which protected the city to the south and east (i. e. the Lower City). He had also developed the city's trading centers, that is, the upper and lower markets along the Tyropoeon Road (see map and illustration). This is evidenced by the weights uncovered by B. Mazar's excavations at the foot of the Temple Mount which date to the fifth year of his reign (AD 41) and are inscribed with initials of his name and the title of king (*basileus* in Greek). In the sixth year of his reign he struck coins intended for use by the Jewish population bearing the hallowed canopy as a symbol of his rule.

The Third Wall: "There is good reason to believe that the Third Wall, which started, according to Josephus, at the Hippicus Tower built by Herod in his Citadel, reached the Psephinus Tower at its northern extension (in modern Jerusalem's Russian Compound) and there turned east as far as a spot facing the Mausoleum of Queen Helen, the so-called 'Tombs of the Kings' in East Jerusalem. It continued around the New City on the north and east (of older Jerusalem) and then descended into the Kidron Valley" (B. Mazar, *The Mountain of the Lord,* pp. 82–83, see diagram). Agrippa's ambitious plan was interrupted, owing apparently to Roman misgivings and possibly by Vibius Marsus, the governor of Syria, under orders from Claudius himself and, finally, by Agrippa's untimely death, as stated by Josephus (*Antiq.* XIX, 326–327); and there it lay uncompleted for many years until finished hastily during the First Revolt (AD 66–70). Doubts were raised by some archaeologists as to the authentic date of this wall (whose foundations and lower layers were uncovered in recent years in several sections north of the present Turkish wall of the Old City) especially by A. Mayer and E. L. Sukenik. The former tended to attribute the construction of the wall to a date later than Agrippa. However the 1972 excavations conducted by Sara Ben Arieh of the Israel Department of Antiquities uncovered, in addition to the substructures of this wall, another long stretch of wall with two towers projecting to the north. The stratigraphy indicated that the wall dated to the first century AD and it is therefore identified as the Third Wall. Lying between the present Nablus Road and the Road of the Engineering Corps, the whole length of this wall consisted of bulging towers and recesses. Various other features such as the width of the wall (4.3 m.) and the tremendous size of its ashlars comparable to the Herodian walls, the northern orientation of the tower mentioned and the Herodian pottery found in the fill of the area south of the wall's substructure, in addition to the ninety towers built along the course of the wall, verified Josephus' description. The re-fortification of Jerusalem was not the only act which led Roman officials to suspect Agrippa's restless nature. In AD 43 there was a meeting with various other kings at Tiberias: Herod of Chalcis (who had married Agrippa's daughter Bernice) and four other kings of provinces north of Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor and as far as Armenia. It looked suspiciously like the formation of some common policy among the frontier kingdoms of the Roman empire. Vibius Marsus abruptly broke up the conference. Agrippa had to swallow his annoyance and his death in AD 44 relieved Rome of any more anxiety.

219[*c*] *Death of Agrippa in Caesarea* "The (Jewish) people, including the women and children straightway sat in sack-cloth in accordance with their ancestral customs and besought God on behalf of the king. Wailing and lamentations prevailed everywhere. The King, as he lay in his lofty bedchamber and looked down on the people lying prostrate in prayer, was close to tears (*Antiq.* XIX, 349)." ..."When, however, news of his death became known to the Caesarean Gentiles... the reactions bore testimony to their deep hatred of Agrippa... They organized a feast for all the people of Caesarea (L. I. Levine, *Caesarea, under Roman Rule*, pp. 27–28)..." "Moreover the troops of Caesarea and Sebaste even insulted his memory" (see also Acts 12, 21–23).

219[*d*]–[*e*] *Reign of three years* But as he had died during the festivities celebrating the triumph of Claudius after his first campaign in Britain, there is no evidence that this merrymaking was intended directly against Agrippa, or that he had been poisoned. In any case, Claudius instructed the newly designated procurator Cuspius Fadus to rebuke the people of Caesarea for their behavior. This intense hostility appears strange indeed, but the fact remains that the non-Jewish population of this metropolis in the Roman Orient resented being ruled by a Jewish king. These demonstrations highlighted a cleavage between Jew and Gentile which had existed for some time, both there and in Alexandria. Josephus does not lay enough stress on current conditions in Caeserea during the historically pivotal years of the first half of the 1st century AD and, more particularly, the city's deep involvement with the events of the province of Judaea. We shall see how this cleavage which simmered beneath the surface for many years, surfaced and erupted with ever increasing bitterness in the ensuing years (cf. 266). In conclusion, Agrippa's reign was a short and transitory golden age in the Herodian period of Jewish history. Though he wanted to consolidate the position of the Jews within the framework of Roman administration and with the help of friendly elements in the imperial court, his reign was too short to have any lasting effect on the relations between the political forces in Judaea and outside it.

Could the Jews coexist with Rome? Palestine continued to be a confused country, and the hatred of the conquered for the conquerors was complicated by the ill-feeling between the upper and lower classes. The upper class consisted mainly of the Sadducees, belonging to the priestly families who monopolized the higher offices (and many of whom lived in the prestigious Upper City) as well as the numerous wealthy landed aristocracy and mercantile class; the other class was strongly Pharisee in sentiment (cf. 162[*a*] above) and was supported by most of the common people, including the Levites. This social division brought many problems. The lower classes clamored for some redistribution of land as the Mosaic Law ordered; many people dreamed of an egalitarian and communal society, like that of the Essenes, while many had become messianists and Zealots who have risen to action in the past few decades. Accordingly, the upper classes seemed to find their natural protectors in the Romans. For the latter protected the great landowners and merchants in Palestine as in Greece and elsewhere, and for such obvious advantages they were apparently prepared to abate the messianic dream and to live on terms with the Romans as pacifists. Not so the populace, often led by Zealots; their hatred and scorn for their foreign rulers—Gentile, idolatrous and unclean by definition of the Law—was even increased by the fact that Rome was the champion of the rich. To the ordinary Jew the duty of paying tribute to Rome, the sight of the Temple area commanded by the Roman garrison in the Antonia Tower, the worry about supervising the use of the sacred vestments of the high priest, and the knowledge that the traditional administration of the Jewish ancestral laws could be limited by the intervention of the Roman procurators—were a continuous offence. Now, as in the past years, the complete lack of understanding and consequently of tolerance that most Jews evinced for the Roman, was matched on the Roman side. Indeed, the Roman lack of sympathy was so great—as it had not been since the days of Pompey—as to overpower their usual administrative sagacity, which would normally have dictated respect for the religious traditions of Judaism. If the procurators could not hide their antipathy in their daily contact with the Jews, far less could their underlings and the auxiliary soldiers drawn from the gentile population of Palestine; hence the repeated clashes in Caesarea and Jerusalem. The one way of restoring some calm was to hand Judaea back to a vassal Jewish king, for this

rendered ineffectual all the attempts of the Romans in the subsequent siege. (219) But before the wall reached its full height he died in Caesarea [*c*] after a reign of three years [*d*] as king following the three years [*e*] of the previous tenure of his tetrarchies. (220) He left three daughters born to him by his wife Cypros: Bernice, Mariamme and Drusilla, and one son, Agrippa. As Agrippa was a minor, Claudius again reduced the kingdom to a province [*f*], dispatching as procurators, first Cuspius Fadus [*g*], followed by Tiberius Alexander [*h*]. By abstaining from all interference with the customs of the country, they kept the nation at peace. (221) After this, Herod, king of Chalcis [*i*] died, leaving by his marriage with his niece Bernice two sons (Bernicianus and Hyrcanus) and another son (Aristobulus) the child of his former wife Mariamme. A third brother, [*j*] a private citizen, also died, leaving a daughter Jotape [*k*]. (222) These three, as mentioned above, were the children of Aristobulus, son of Herod; Aristobulus and Alexander were born to Herod by Mariamme and put to death by their father. Alexander's descendants established a dynasty in greater Armenia [*l*].

Chapter XII

1. Agrippa II's rule over Chalcis; Cumanus procurator in Judaea

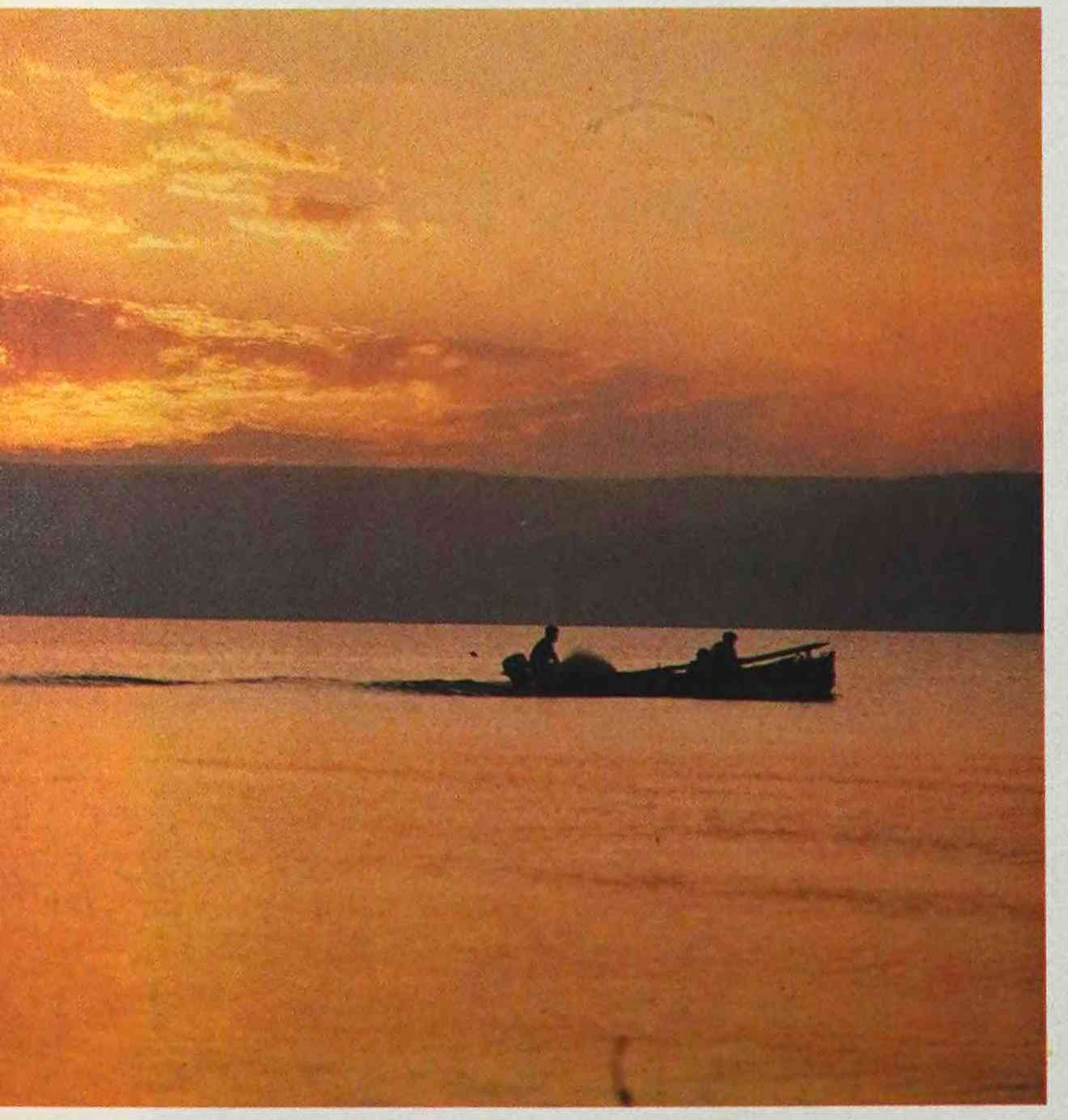
(223) After the death of Herod, who ruled over Chalcis, Claudius established as king there Herod's nephew Agrippa, son of Agrippa [*a*]. In the rest of the province the procurator (Tiberius) Alexander was succeeded by Cumanus [*b*]. Under his administration disturbances broke out, marked by another [*b*] great loss of Jewish lives. (224) The usual crowds had assembled in Jerusalem for the Feast of Unleavened Bread [*c*], and the Roman cohort stood on guard over the Temple porticoes [*d*]; an armed guard was always there at the feasts to forestall any rioting by the vast crowds. One of the soldiers pulled up his garment and bent over indecently, turning his posterior to the Jews and making a noise as obscene as his attitude. (225) The insult infuriated the whole crowd, who cried out an appeal to Cumanus to punish the soldier; while the less restrained of the young men and the seditious persons in the crowd started fighting, and snatching up stones, hurled them at the troops. (226) Cumanus, fearing that the whole population would attack him, sent for reinforcements. When these troops poured into the porticoes, the Jews were seized with uncontrollable panic and turned to fly from the Temple courts into the city. (227) So violently did the dense mass struggle to escape through the exits [*e*] that they were trodden underfoot and, crushing one another, more than thirty thousand people died. Thus the Feast ended in total distress to the nation and mourning in every household.

Fishermen and sea gulls on the lake, from an Etruscan (ancient Roman) fresco

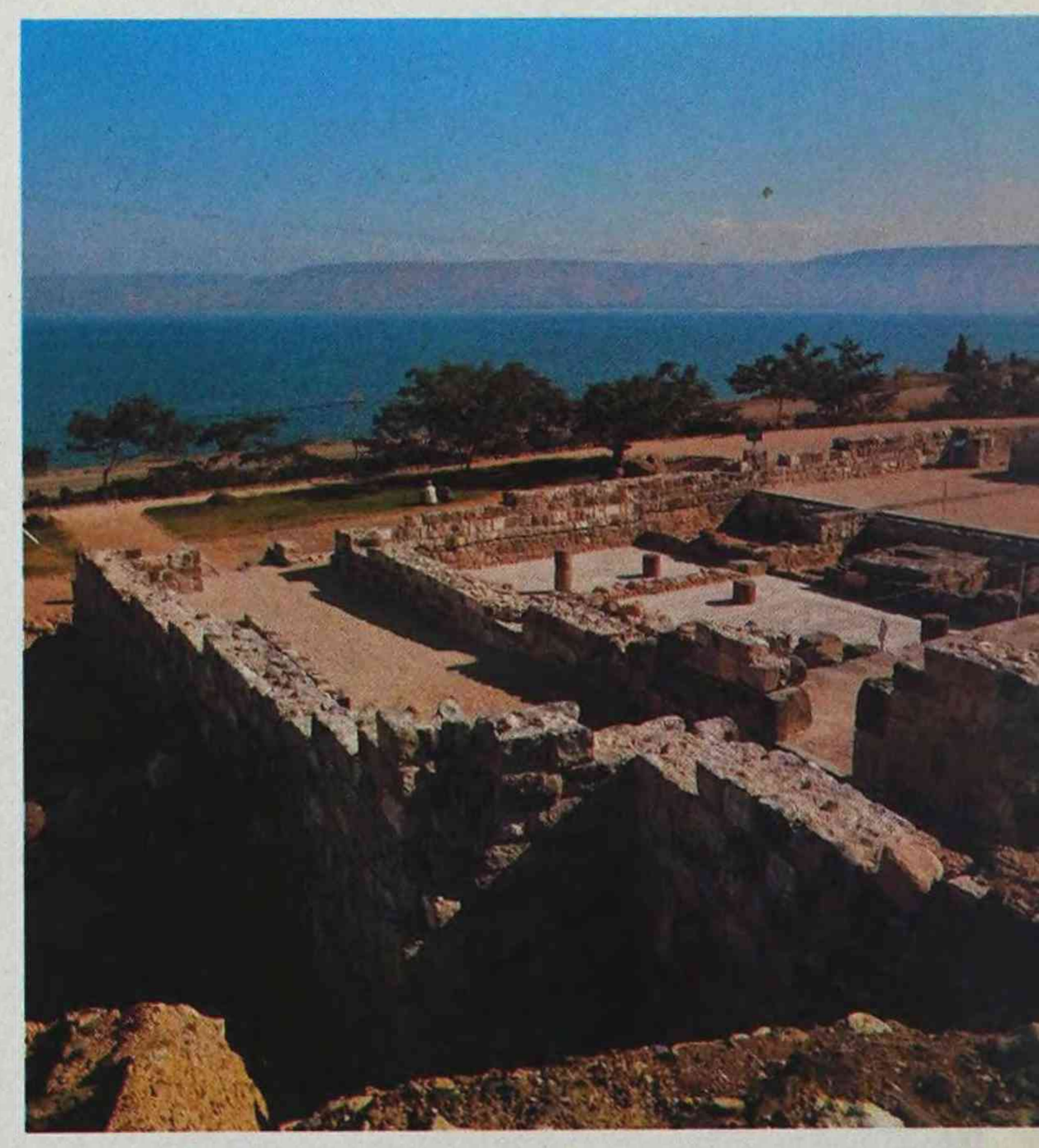
A swift sailboat such as the one used by Vespasian to cross the Mediterranean

Monumental 1st-century BC tomb in the ancient necropolis in the Kidron Valley, east of Jerusalem, miscalled "Absalom's Tomb" but actually that of a member of the priestly aristocracy

Sunrise on the Sea of Galilee



Herod Antipas' greatest creation was Tiberias (near Julias) on the Sea of Galilee



would give the Jews a feeling of greater autonomy and put an end to the constant friction between governors and governed. This policy was begun by Claudius, and the short reign of Agrippa I saw the early stages of pacification. With the reappearance of the procurators, the old enmity flared up again. Moreover, the relations between Jews and Gentiles in Palestine tensed, while religious emotion found more overt expression through mystic and nationalist messianism.

219[*e*] *Tenure of his tetrarchies. The extent of Agrippa's reign. Antiq.* XIX, 351 gives a more precise statement. Agrippa reigned four years in all under Gaius (Caligula—37–41) and three under Claudius (AD 41–44). For the first three years under Caligula he held the tetrachies of Philip and Lysanias; for the fourth he held that of Antipas as well. His reign, as mentioned in the above passage, was limited to his tenure of the whole kingdom as it had existed in the days of King Herod.

220[*f*] *Judaea again becomes a Roman province* Strange as it may seem, Josephus glides without comment over the impending political change; and yet Agrippa's death brought about a drastic change in the status of Judaea. Though Claudius had weighed the possibility of continuing Judaea's status as an allied kingdom, the minority of the heir (young Agrippa, only 17 years old) served as an excuse for *abolishing the Jewish kingdom and for recreating it as a Roman border province.* The decision was unfortunate. Direct Roman rule over a sensitive race might have been mitigated by capable and prestigious rulers, but the procurators sent out were little credit to the imperial administration, and their choice reveals the influence that his freedmen could exert over Claudius. Thus the same type of equestrian procurators were sent out to Judaea with auxiliary troops and a few veteran legions as previously.

220[*g*] *Cuspius Fadus* (44–56), who came after Agrippa's death, intended at first to revive a Roman practice of keeping the robes of the high priests in the fortress of Antonia under Roman supervision. A Jewish delegation protested to Claudius who decided to allow the vestments of the sanctuary to be guarded by the Jews. Fadus also lacked another prerogative of the former Roman governors: the appointment of the high priests. This was granted to another Herodian prince, Herod of Chalcis (cf. 221). There were also quarrels between Jews and Gentiles in the province over the possession of land, which Fadus quelled. Josephus' statement about the procurators' neutrality in facing current problems seems to sum up certain aspects of the problem. However the statement fails to take note of the strong messianic and Zealot movements that agitated the province (except where he mentions certain isolated episodes, Fadus' reaction to the Zealot, Theudas (*Antiq.* XX, 97–98) was no less harsh and peremptory than that of Pontius Pilate in the case of Jesus of Nazareth and the subsequent massacre of the Samaritans.

220[*h*] *Tiberius Alexander,* who succeeded Fadus (46–48), was an Alexandrian Jew and an ambitious careerist who abandoned his Judaism for the Roman prestigious *cursus honorum.* He was principally in contact with Herod of Chalcis, Bernice's second husband who, as explained above, was still in charge of the affairs of the Jerusalem Temple and responsible for the appointment of high priests, several of whom were men of great wealth and power. It is doubtful whether the Jews received Tiberius Alexander, an apostate, with open arms. What is more significant in the course of these years were obscure events, initiated by messianists and Zealots which began underground and surfaced between the late fifties and seventies of the first century AD. There were disturbances caused by the Zealot dynasty of Judas the Galilean, namely his two sons Jacob and Simeon. Tiberius Alexander crucified them both (*Antiq.* XX, 102); (Tiberius is heard of again in the days of Titus; *War* VI, 237). We know little else of his government, but it marked another definite step forward in the discontent of the people, which was aggravated by the famine that began to plague Palestine after the death of Agrippa I.

221[*i*] *Herod, King of Chalcis* (in Lebanon) as seen above (220[*h*]) took charge of the religious administration in Jerusalem. His death did not interfere with Jewish internal autonomy in this respect.

221[*j*] A third brother of Agrippa.

221[*k*] *Jotape.* The name is derived from that of her mother, a princess of Emesa in Asia Minor (*Antiq.* XVIII, 135).

221[*l*] *Armenia and the Herodian princes* The connection of Herodian princes and Armenia may be explained by the fact that the enmity between Rome and Parthia was particularly strong at the beginning of Claudius' reign, and that the position of Armenia, a buffer state between the Roman and Parthian domains, continued to be a bone of contention between the two powers. Claudius had first restored Mithridates to the Armenian throne. Later it appears that the Roman emperors appointed other friendly princes to rule over this kingdom (other details may be gathered from *Antiq.* XVIII, 139).

223[*a*] The reference in the text is to the Herod of Chalcis mentioned in note 221[*i*]. Though Claudius had decided against appointing the young Agrippa to rule over Judaea (note 220[*f*]), this was not due to hostility to the young Agrippa, for in AD 50 Claudius sent him out to rule Chalcis after his uncle's death, and three years later added to it Philip's tetrarchy, together with Batanaea, Trachonitis and Abilene, northeast of of Judaea.

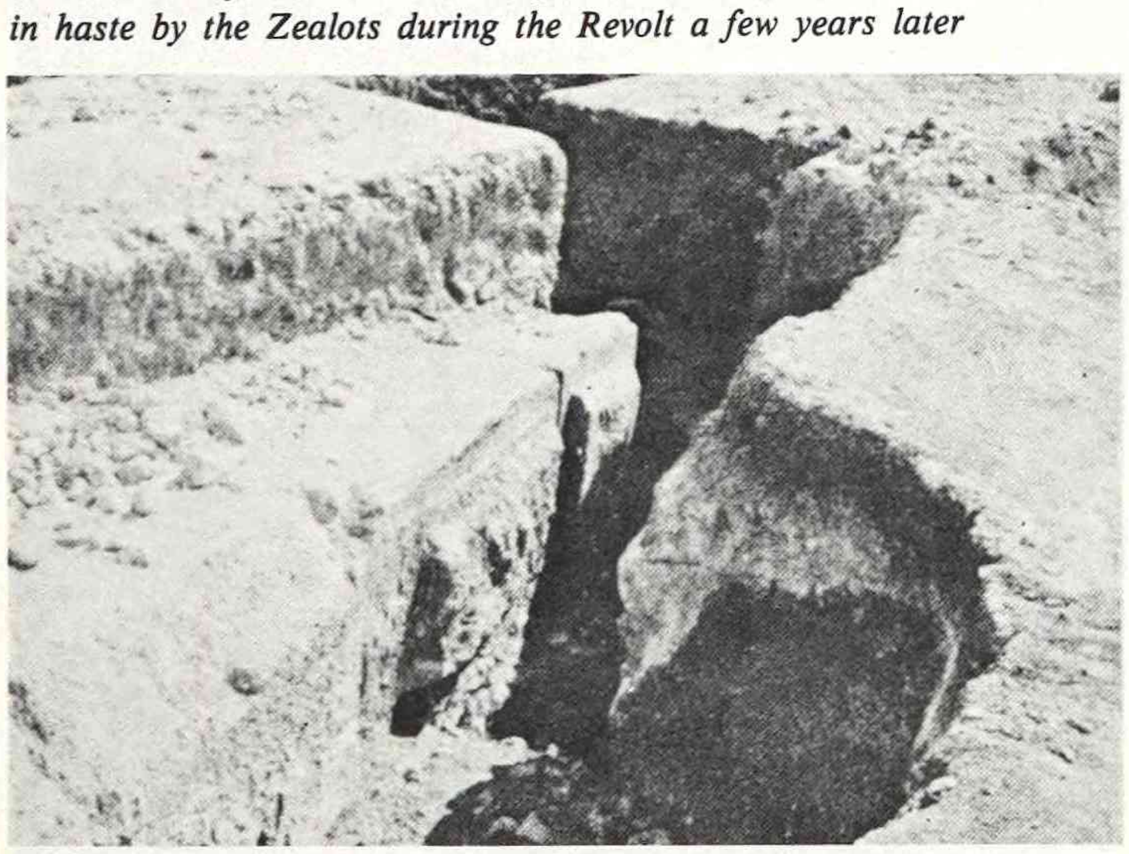
223[*b*] *The procurator Ventidius Cumanus* was a new disaster to the population, and echoes that (described above in *War* II, 51 ff.) which occurred during the War of Varus.

224[*c*] Namely, *the Passover,* when masses of pilgrims assembled in Jerusalem and participated in the ritual observed on the Temple Mount grounds.

224[*d*] The porticoes *(stoas)* which surrounded the Temple esplanade, including the higher southern *Royal Stoa* (portico) described towards the end of *Antiq.* XV, 410–420.

227[*e*] There were eight or nine exits available, about 6–8 m. wide through which five to ten times as many people as the reported 30,000 victims rushed to avoid being hit by the missiles hurled at them by the soldiers posted over the porticoes, as described in 224.

Foundations of the Third Wall begun by King Agrippa I and completed in haste by the Zealots during the Revolt a few years later



229[*a*] The site was the historic mountain passes of Beth-Horon some twenty kms northwest of Jerusalem through which the Hasmoneans fought with the Greeks. The derogatory epithet brigands as used by Josephus seems to suggest a bold attack by a band of Zealots, and not ordinary robbers; furthermore, they would have been sheltered by the neighboring villagers and sympathizers, as suspected by the Romans and as implied by Josephus' careful wording.

229[*b*] Book is synonymous with a Scroll of the Law (*Sefer Torah* in Hebrew) namely the Pentateuch scroll. This detail is not mentioned in the corresponding passage in *Antiquities*.

232[*a*] *Gema* (modern Jenin) in the southern part of the Plain of Jezreel (Esdraelon) stretching between Samaria and Galilee. Galilean pilgrims used to pass Genna on their way to Jerusalem.

233[*b*] Several pilgrims were murdered, according to *Antiq.* XX, 118.

233[*c*] Cumanus was bribed by the Samaritans, according to *Antiq.* XX, 27–28.

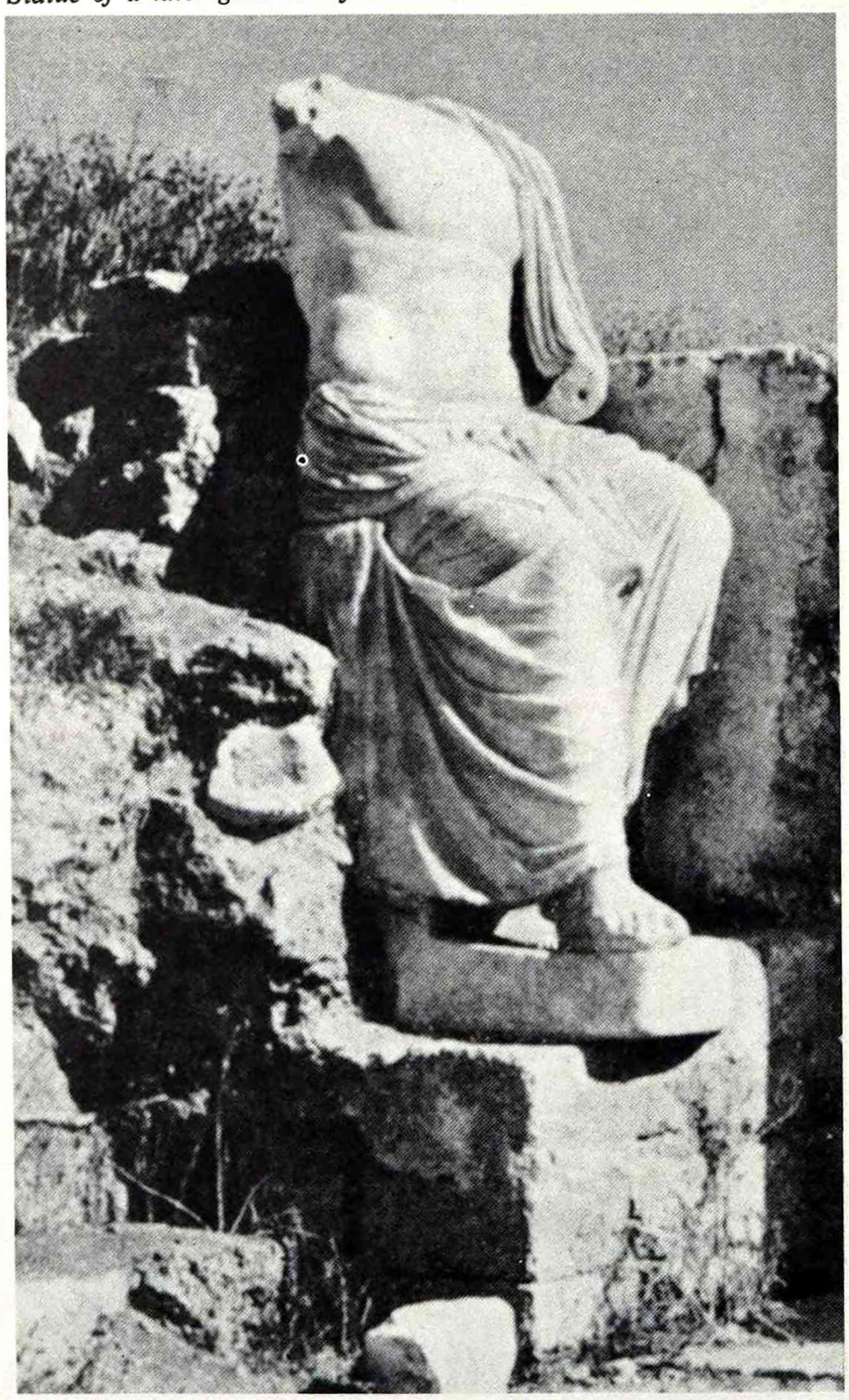
235[*a*] Josephus associates the epithets "brigands" and "rioters" with Zealot leaders such as Eleazar and Alexander.

235[*b*] The toparchy, or district, of *Acrabatene* (Acrabata) was situated on the borderline between Samaria and Judaea.

236[*a*] The name designated troops recruited from Sebaste in Samaria (*War* II, 74). *Antiq.* XX, 222 adds four units or cohorts of infantry and one of cavalry. Cumanus saw himself obligated to defend the Samaritans in force and to quell a Zealot uprising.

237[*b*] *Sackcloth... ashes*. Used in times of national mourning and calamity.

Statue of a later governor of Caesarea



2. The scandalous profanation of the scroll of the Law

(228) This disaster was followed by a further disturbance, the work of brigands. On the public road to Beth-horon brigands attacked a slave of Caesar named Stephen and robbed him of the baggage he had with him. (229) Cumanus sent out troops to bring to him the inhabitants of the neighboring villages in chains [*a*], blaming them for their failure to pursue and capture the brigands. In one village, a soldier on this occasion found a copy of the sacred Law, tore the book [*b*] into pieces and flung it into the fire. (230) The Jews, as if their whole country were in flames, flocked together, religious fervor drawing them together like an instrument. On the first announcement of the news, they hurried in a body to Cumanus in Caesarea, where they besought him not to leave unpunished the author of such an outrage to God and their Law. (231) Cumanus, seeing that the multitude could not be appeased unless amends were made, agreed to send for the soldier and ordered him to be led between the lines of his accusers to his execution. Then the Jews withdrew.

3. The clash of the Galileans and Samaritans over the Galilean's murder

(232) Next came a clash between Galileans and Samaritans. At a village called Gema [*a*] situated in the great plain of Samaria [*a*]. (233) A Galilean, one of a large company of pilgrims on their way up to the festival, was murdered [*b*]. This brought a considerable number of Galileans to the spot to attack the Samaritans. However, the notables of the country went to Cumanus and begged him that before fatal damage was done, he should go to Galilee and punish the perpetrators of the murder, as this was the only way of dispersing the crowd before they came to blows. Cumanus, however, made their petition take second place to matters then in hand, and dismissed the petitioners without satisfying them [*c*].

4. (234) When the news of the murder reached Jerusalem, the crowds were infuriated, and, abandoning the festival, they rushed off to Samaria, without generals, paying no heed to the magistrates who sought to hold them back. (235) The brigands and rioters [*a*] among the party were led by Eleazar, son of Deinaeus, and Alexander [*a*] who, attacking those neighboring on the borders of the toparchy of Acrabatene [*b*], massacred the inhabitants, sparing neither young nor old, and set fire to the villages.

5. (236) Cumanus, taking from Caesarea one troop of cavalry called the "Sebastenians" [*a*], went off to assist those who were being ravaged, imprisoned many of Eleazar's companions and killed still more. (237) As for the rest of the crowd that had set out to fight the Samaritans, the Jerusalem magistrates hurried after them clad in sackcloth [*b*] and with ashes strewn

upon their heads. They besought them to return home and not to provoke the Romans to attack Jerusalem by their desire for reprisals on the Samaritans. They must take pity on their country and the sanctuary, their own wives and children—all of which, for the sake of avenging the blood of one Galilean, were in danger of being destroyed. (238) Yielding to these appeals the Jews dispersed; but many, emboldened by impunity, turned to banditry; and all over the country plundering continued, the bolder individuals rising in revolt [*c*]. (239) The Samaritan leaders went to Tyre to Ummidius Quadratus legate of Syria, and urged him to punish those who had ravaged their land. (240) Jewish notables, including the High Priest Jonathan, son of Ananus, also presented themselves. They declared that it was the Samaritans who had originated the disturbances by the murder [*d*], but blame for what had followed lay with Cumanus, since he had refused to take action against the actual killers.

6. Intervention by Quadratus, the governor of Syria

(241) Quadratus for the time being put off both delegations with the promise that when he reached the area he would inquire into all the particulars; subsequently he went to Caesarea [*a*] where he crucified all the prisoners taken by Cumanus. (242) From there he went to Lydda [*b*], where he gave the Samaritans another hearing; then he sent for eighteen Jews who were reported to have taken part in the fighting and beheaded them. (243) He sent to Caesar, besides two other men in most important positions, the high priests Jonathan and Ananias [*c*], Ananus, the son of the latter, and some other Jewish notables, together with most distinguished Samaritans. (244) He further instructed Cumanus [*d*] and Celer, the military tribune, to sail for Rome and to render an account of their conduct to Claudius. After these arrangements, he went from Lydda to Jerusalem; and upon finding that the people were quietly celebrating the Feast of Unleavened Bread [*e*], he returned to Antioch.

7. Claudius' decision in favor of the Jews; Cumanus banished

(245) At Rome, Caesar heard what Cumanus and the Samaritans had to say in the presence of Agrippa [*a*], who ardently supported the Jews, while Cumanus, on his side, was supported by many eminent persons. Claudius found the Samaritans guilty and ordered their three most powerful men to be executed. (246) He banished Cumanus and sent back Celer in chains to Jerusalem with orders that he should be handed over to the Jews for torture, dragged around the city and finally beheaded.

8. Felix, procurator; promotion of Agrippa II

(247) After this he despatched Felix [*a*], the brother of Pallas, as procurator of Judaea, Samaria, Galilee and Peraea. He transferred Agrippa from Chalcis to a

238[*c*] *Clashes between Jews and Samaritans* This affair marked the lowest point reached in the strained relations between Jews and Samaritans at the end of the period of the Second Temple, and this matter took up the remainder of Cumanus' term of office. On the other hand, under Zealot leadership, tension is bitterly expressed in incidents such as had occurred previously under Coponius (118).

240[*d*] *Jonathan* was later the victim of the "Sicarii" Zealot terrorists (254 [*a*]–[*b*], 256[*c*]).

241[*a*] *Antiq.* XX, 129 avers that he went to Samaria, which seems less probable.

242[*b*] Generally in times of crisis, the Roman legate to Syria would come to Judaea to manage affairs.

243[*c*] *Ananias,* who was the high priest, and Jonathan, the son of Ananias (Ananus, *Antiq.* XX, 118–137) the former high priest, were the leading Jewish spokesmen.

244[*d*] Meanwhile, Cumanus was suspended (246).

244[*e*] The Passover celebrations were held there in orderly fashion; the disturbances in the country had lasted apparently since the previous Passover (224).

245[*a*] *King Agrippa II,* the principal spokesman for the Jews, had the backing of the Empress Agrippina and one of her followers, Pallas, another of Claudius' freedmen. The latter was interested in the promotion of his brother Felix, who had apparently already held office in the Roman administration of Palestine (see 247). Ultimately, Claudius decided in favor of the Jews.

247[*a*] According to *Antiq.* XX, 118–137, Felix's promotion was enthusiastically supported among the Jews by Jonathan the son of Ananias.

Engraved silver for a scroll of the Law (Torah) *found in Persia, dating to 1764*

247[*b*] This Varus may have been a descendant of Soemus, who had been a tetrarch in the district of Lebanon, and it is assumed that he inherited this tetrarchy for a time.

249[*c*] *Agrippina carries out her dynastic scheme* In other words, Claudius' wife had tricked him into adopting Nero as heir, though he had a son of his own, Britannicus, by Messalina, his former wife (famed for her amours) and a daughter, Octavia, whom he had given in marriage to Nero. Moreover, to secure her own safety and the succession for Nero, Agrippina poisoned Claudius with a dish of mushrooms, and this gives a point to Nero's later jest about mushrooms being the food of the gods, referring to the last meal partaken by their divine Claudius.

252[*a*] Herod of Chalcis, grandson of King Herod.

252[*b*] Confirming in AD 52 his previous appointment (247).

253[*c*] *"Brigands"* in Josephus' terminology is often synonymous with rebeles. If they were just robbers the procurator could punish them on the spot without having to send them to Rome.

254[*a*] *"Sicarii"* defines the extremist sect of Zealots who were then beginning to take a hand in events, as will become evident (256; *Antiq.* XX, 162–165).

255[*b*] The short curved dagger is *sica* in Latin; hence their designation *Sicarii,* or the "men of the knife".

256[*c*] *Jonathan's assassination* Felix took office in AD 52 in an alliance with the Jews and ended it in open quarrel with them eight years later. However, for the last part of his term, he worked in close agreement with influential Jewish circles and even married Drusilla, one of Agrippa's daughters, and had good reason to advertise his link with the Herodian aristocrats. On the other hand, Ananias, the high priest, continued to strengthen his own position with the Roman administration, supported apparently by Agrippa II who had the power, by Roman fiat, to appoint and dismiss high priests. On the other hand, relations between Jonathan, the son of Ananias and Felix worsened in spite of the former's connection with the Roman procurator. Felix regarded Jonathan as a nuisance because the latter kept on offering moral counsel, possibly because he had supported Felix's candidacy and felt in some way responsible for the procurator's behavior. Josephus asserts that Felix decided to rid himself of Jonathan once and for all and encouraged the Sicarii to perpetrate the crime (his assertion is naturally difficult to ascertain; it is not made in the above text but is mentioned in *Antiq.* XX, 162). Whether it is true or not, there can be no doubt that the high priests, though philo-Roman, never really had a complete understanding with the procurators, possibly owing to personal antipathies, but mainly for other reasons as well. They were active in the leadership of the Sanhedrin, which was always wary of the procurators' policies regarding the governed Jews; and the violent partisan quarrels in high priestly circles could not be favored by Rome since they only served to complicate and aggravate the situation in Judaea. It should be understood that under the procurators, the Jewish internal government became more of a theocracy, in which the priesthood was the primary representative of the Sadducean aristocracy. Nevertheless, we learn that the famed Pharisee, Rabbi Gamaliel the Elder, was apparently the head of the Sanhedrin. Various high priests performed important political tasks as seemed to have been the case with Caiaphas in the days of Pontius Pilate. We know little about him from Jewish sources except that his son, Joseph, served for a longer time than other high priests. The other information on Caiaphas is derived from the Gospels.

259[*a*] *Wilderness* Matthew 24, 24 "There shall arise... false prophets and shall sow great signs... they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the wilderness." Theudas was an earlier prototype who had met a similar fate (*Antiq.* XX, 97).

261[*a*] *False prophets or messianists* Josephus, who evinced so deep a sympathy for the Essenes (who were messianists), totally ignored the genuineness of other contemporary messianic movements. Was this due to priestly or political prejudice (in which he included the Zealots as well)? This may be elucidated as one delves into the subsequent books of the *Wars.* Nevertheless, whether he gave them credit or not, it is an historical fact that the underground movement fostered by the Zealot dynasty of Judas the Galilean (*War* II, 118) had struck deep roots and messianic hopes, whether or not connected with the underground revolutionary movement, which had spread more widely than ever. They helped to feed the early Judaeo-Christian messianic movement during

larger kingdom, giving him Philip's former province, namely Trachonitis, Batanaea and Gaulanitis. He added to this the kingdom of Lysanias and the old tetrarchy of Varus [*b*].

9. Death of Claudius

(248) After governing the empire for thirteen years, eight months and twenty days, Claudius died, leaving Nero as his successor. (249) Yielding to the artifices of his wife Agrippina [*c*], he had adopted this prince as heir to the throne, although by his former wife, Messalina, he had a legitimate son, Britannicus, and a daughter Octavia, whom he had given in marriage to Nero. He also had another daughter Antonia, by Petina.

Chapter XIII

1. Character of Nero

(250) As a result of excess of prosperity and wealth Nero lost his mind and abused his good fortune. He did away with his brother, wife and mother successively, and (251) then his cruelty found fresh victims among the highest of the nobility. Finally, through his madness he ended up on the stage and in the theater—but these things are so well known, that I will pass them over to turn to events of Jewish history under his reign.

2. Agrippa's kingdom enlarged; the rebels quelled by Felix

(252) Nero gave the kingdom of Little Armenia to Aristobulus, son of Herod [*a*], and he annexed to Agrippa's kingdom four cities with their districts, namely Abila and Julias in Peraea [*b*], and Tarichaea and Tiberias in Galilee; he appointed Felix procurator over the rest of Judaea. (253) Felix captured the brigand-chief Eleazar who had been plundering the country for twenty years with many of his men. He sent them as prisoners to Rome; the brigands [*c*] whom he crucified, and the citizens, as their accomplices, were too numerous to count.

3. Rise of the Sicarii Zealots

(254) However, when the countryside had been cleared of these rebels another kind of group sprang up in Jerusalem, the so-called *Sicarii* [*a*] who committed numerous murders in broad daylight and in the middle of the city. (255) They used to mingle with the crowd, especially during festivals, carrying short daggers [*b*] concealed under their clothing, with which they stabbed their opponents. Then, when the victims fell, the murderers joined the indignant crowd, and acting inconspicuously, they were never discovered. (256) The first to be assassinated by them was Jonathan, the high priest [*c*], and after him many were murdered every day. More terrible than the crimes themselves was the panic they aroused, with everyone,

as on the battlefield, hourly expecting death. (257) Men watched at a distance for their enemies and would not trust their friends when they came near them. Yet, in spite of their suspicions and precautions, they were murdered; such was the suddenness of the conspirators' attack and their skill in eluding detection.

4. False prophets and messianists

(258) In addition, there was another rebel group with purer hands but wickeder intentions, who did as much damage as the assassins in ruining the well-being of the city. (259) Deceivers and imposters, claiming divine inspiration, they fostered revolutionary changes by inciting the mob to frenzied enthusiasm and by leading them into the wilderness [*a*] under the belief that God would show them omens of freedom there. (260) Thereupon Felix, regarding this as the beginning of a revolt, sent a body of cavalry and heavy-armed infantry and put a large number to the sword.

5. The Egyptian messianist "false prophet"

(261) A greater blow was inflicted on the Jews by the Egyptian false prophet [*a*]. Arriving in the country, this man, a charlatan who had gained for himself the reputation of a prophet, collected about thirty thousand dupes [*b*] (262) and led them by a circuitous route from the wilderness to the rise called the Mount of Olives. From there he was ready to force an entry into Jerusalem, and after overpowering the Roman garrison, to assume control of the people, employing his fellow raiders as his bodyguard. (263) However, Felix anticipated his attempt by meeting him with the Roman heavy infantry, the whole population rallying to his defense. The outcome of the ensuing clash was that the Egyptian fled with a handful of men, while most of his followers were killed or captured. The remainder dispersed and stole away stealthily to their respective homes.

6. Further Zealot rebellions

(264) No sooner had these troubles died down than the inflammation, as in a sick man's body, broke out again in another quarter. The impostors and brigands, banding together, incited many to revolt, exhorting them to assert their independence [*a*]. They threatened to kill any who submitted willingly to Roman domination and to suppress all those who would accept servitude voluntarily. (265) Then, deployed in gangs throughout the country, they looted the houses of the nobles and killed their owners. They set villages on fire [*b*], so that all Judaea felt the effect of their frenzy and day by day the fighting blazed more fiercely.

7. Disorders at Caesarea between Jews and Gentiles in AD 59–60

(266) Another disturbance occurred at Caesarea, where the Jewish portion of the population came to

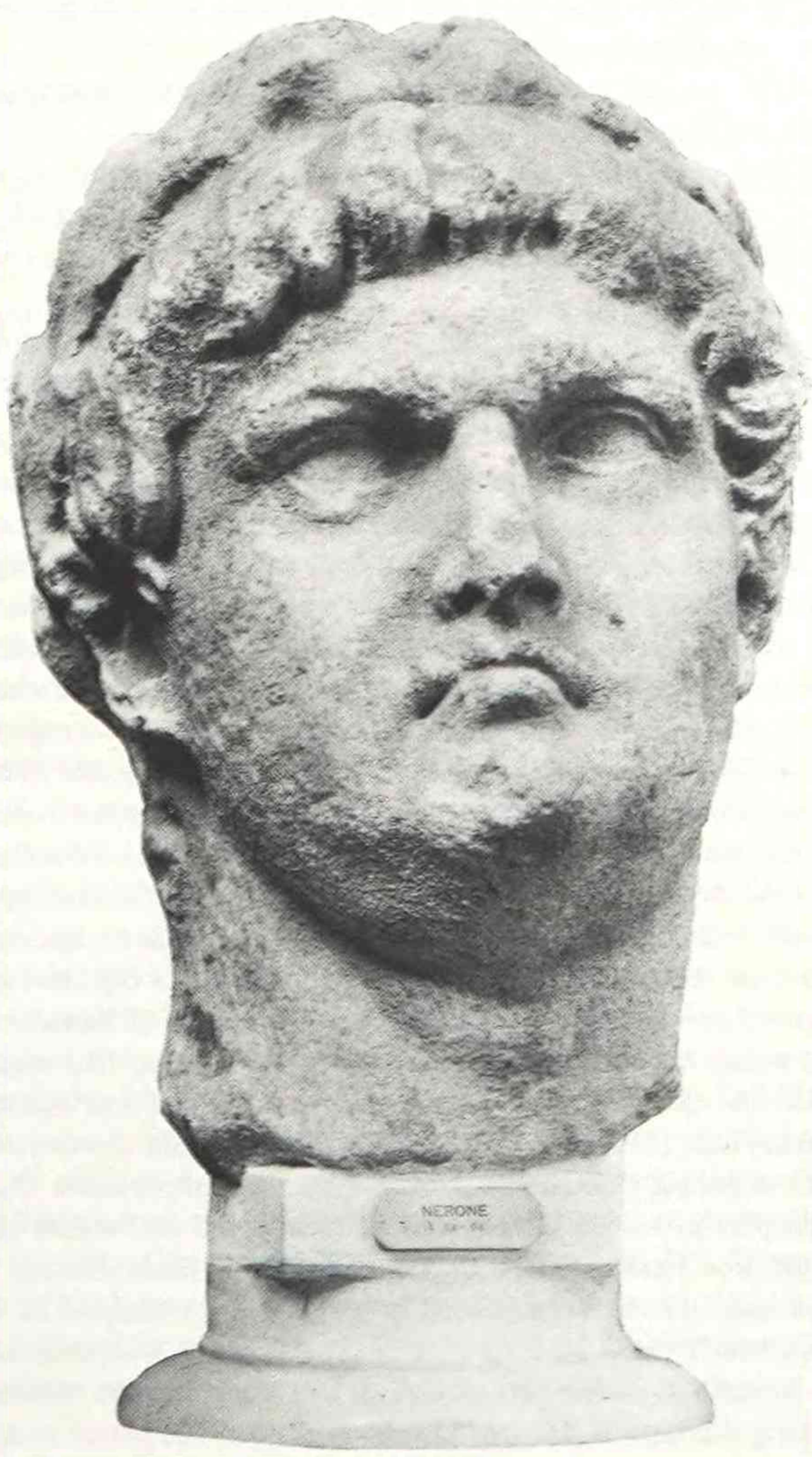
and after the days of Jesus of Nazareth. They also filled up the ranks of nonconformists and rebels after the death of Jesus.

261[*b*] *Dupes; the messianic message on the Mount of Olives* The participants numbered 4000 according to Acts 21, 38 (and Paul was mistaken for the messianist in question). The so-called Egyptian promised his followers to bring down the walls of Jerusalem before their eyes and deliver the Roman garrison into their hands while he himself would reign.

264[*a*] *Independence. The widespread messianic movements in the fourth and fifth decades of the first century AD* This repetitive episode bears no direct comparison with the revolutionary agitation of the former decade that was immortalized by Jesus of Nazareth; nor has Josephus exaggerated the numbers estimated to have participated in the Mt. of Olives event. The episode merely serves to give point to the widespread expansion of messianic movements throughout the 30's and 40's of the first century AD. The fact that Josephus fails to mention in his *War* the passion of Jesus in the days of Pontius Pilate and Caiaphas could be an oversight of one more incident of this nature in the overall recurring turmoil. It may also be linked with Josephus' general lack of enthusiasm for messianism with which he was so familiar, a point of view natural to the conservative Pharisees. Though they believed in principle in the eventual coming of a Messiah "Son of David", they continually chided the enthusiasts who tried impatiently to "hasten" the coming of the Messiah.

265[*b*] *Felix's prestige is undermined* The massacre perpetrated by Felix's army merely served to increase the number of rebels. They intensified their struggle against the Roman authority in the last years of his procuratorship, believing that any means justified their attempt to strengthen their position. Raids were organized against villages which opposed them, resulting in wholesale massacre. Thus towards the end of Felix's term of office his prestige in the countryside was undermined, while even in Jerusalem life was not safe (*Antiq.* XX, 172).

Nero (Museum of the Terme, Rome)



blows with the Syrian [*a*] inhabitants. The Jews claimed that the city was theirs on the ground that the founder had been a Jew [*b*], King Herod. Their opponents admitted the Jewish origin of its patron, but maintained that the city itself belonged to the Greeks, since Herod would not have erected the statues and temples had he intended it for the Jews [*c*]. (267) Such were the points at issue between the two sides, that eventually, the dispute developed into an armed struggle. Every day, the bolder individuals in each camp would rush forth to battle; for the older members [*d*] of the Jewish community were unable to restrain their turbulent partisans, and the Greeks considered it humiliating to be worsted by the Jews. (268) The latter had the advantage in material resources and physical strength [*e*], the Greeks [*f*] enjoyed the help of the military; for the troops stationed there were mainly levied by the Romans in Syria, and were consequently ready to help their compatriots [*g*]. (269) The magistrates, anxious to quell the disturbances, constantly arrested the more pugnacious offenders and punished them with whipping and imprisonment; but the pains of those arrested so far from checking or frightening the remainder, only served as a stimulus to rioting. (270) On one occasion when the Jews were victorious, Felix came into the market place [*h*] and ordered them with threats to retire. When they refused to obey, he set his troops upon them and killed a large number and plundered their property. As, however,

266[*a*] Meaning the Syro-Hellenic inhabitants.

266[*b*] *Jew* There was a legal aspect to the strife in Caesarea; this was connected with the residents' civil rights, as the Jews based their claims on the argument that the city had been built by a Jew, Herod. The Syro-Hellenic spokesmen for the pagans, while not denying this, based their case on the ancient name of the city, Strato's Tower. In any case, in Caesarea, as in other cities of the Roman Empire, the Jews were probably organized into a *politeuma*, a quasi-autonomous civic community similar to the Hellenic municipal organization.

266[*c*] Josephus' story of the building of Caesarea as reported in *War* I, 408–414 and in *Antiq.* XV, 328–329 reflects different views. The first, drawing on the historian Nicolaus of Damascus, offers the "official" Herodian view, that is that Caesarea was part of Herod's realm. *Antiquities*, which draws on other sources as well, tends towards the view that Caesarea was a non-exclusive Jewish city while Herod had honored the city with statues, temples and pagan sculptural forms in the manner of the Greeks. *Antiq.* XX, 173 also attributes the origin of the city to Strato's Tower, which was not Jewish. It had originally been a Phoenician harbor.

267[*d*] *The Jews and the Syro-Hellenic inhabitants of Caesarea* The Jewish community is referred to by Josephus in *Antiq.* XX, 182 as "the Jewish residents of Caesarea" and the historian Philo uses the same term in reference to the Jewish community of Alexandria, also clearly organized as a *politeuma*. "The leaders of the Caesarean community are referred to as the 'first men' in *Antiq.* XX, 182, as 'elders', 'notables,' 'leaders' in *War* II, 267, 287, 290 and were twelve in number. This governing group was thus similar to the conventional *gerousia* which also stood at the head of the Alexandrian Jewish community. Members of the *politeuma* at large were probably convened for the consideration of broad issues... Undoubtedly, religious and educational affairs came under their jurisdiction as did supervision of Jewish welfare and other collegia" (L. I. Levine, *Caesarea Under Roman Rule*, pp. 23, 161).

268[*e*] *The Jewish inhabitants of Caesarea* Nevertheless, from the beginning, Jews constituted a significant part of Caesarea's population, possibly over half the inhabitants according to L. I. Levine. This may have led to Josephus' statement that the Jews were superior in "physical strength" when confronting the pagan community (268[*b*]).

268[*f*]–[*g*] As soldiers from Sebaste and Caesarea intervened on behalf of the pagans, the latter gained the advantage.

270[*h*] One case of provocation apparently ended in a clear victory for the Jews, and the procurator Felix ordered the soldiers to attack them. The market place is the forum of Caesarea, traces of which are visible to this day.

270[*i*] Felix was convinced that the final solution to the problem of civic rights in Caesarea was outside his competence; so he sent off separate delegations to Nero in Rome.

271[*a*] *The turmoil in the days of Festus (AD 60–62)* Josephus has surprisingly little to say in this book about Porcius Festus, though he makes it clear in *Antiq.* XX, 182–196 how hostilities continued unabated. When the dispute in Caesarea was referred to Nero (see note 270[*i*]), the Jews complained about the way the affair was handled by the procurator, Felix. They failed on both counts: Pallas, Felix's brother, persuaded the emperor to dismiss the charges against his brother. The Caesarean Greeks, having bribed Nero's Greek secretary, Beryllus, succeeded in gaining a rescript annulling the equal civil rights *(isopoliteia)* claimed by Jews as was their right (*Antiq.* XX, 183–184). Tension in the city reached a new pitch as the Jews refused to reconcile themselves to their equivocal position, while the Greek population regarded the emperor's decree as finally establishing the position of the Jews as second class citizens. Festus found all Judaea in a state of turmoil as the troubles which had afflicted his predecessor's procuratorship continued unabated. The extremist rebel organizations maintained their agitation in the countryside (293[*a*]). The Sicarii still terrorized Jerusalem and hundreds of people enthusiastically followed messianic leaders. One self-styled prophet promised salvation to all who would follow him into the wilderness, and Festus dealt with him as Felix had dealt with the Egyptian messianic leader; he succeded in slaying him (*Antiq.* XX, 128).

The priesthood's clash with Agrippa II The situation worsened when in AD 61 Rome had added part of Galilee and Peraea to the realm of the Jewish king Agrippa II. He had also been granted the power to appoint

Ruins of the Caesarea synagogue (fifth century AD)

the discord continued, Felix picked out the leading men [*i*] of the two parties and sent them to Nero as ambassadors, to argue before him their respective rights.

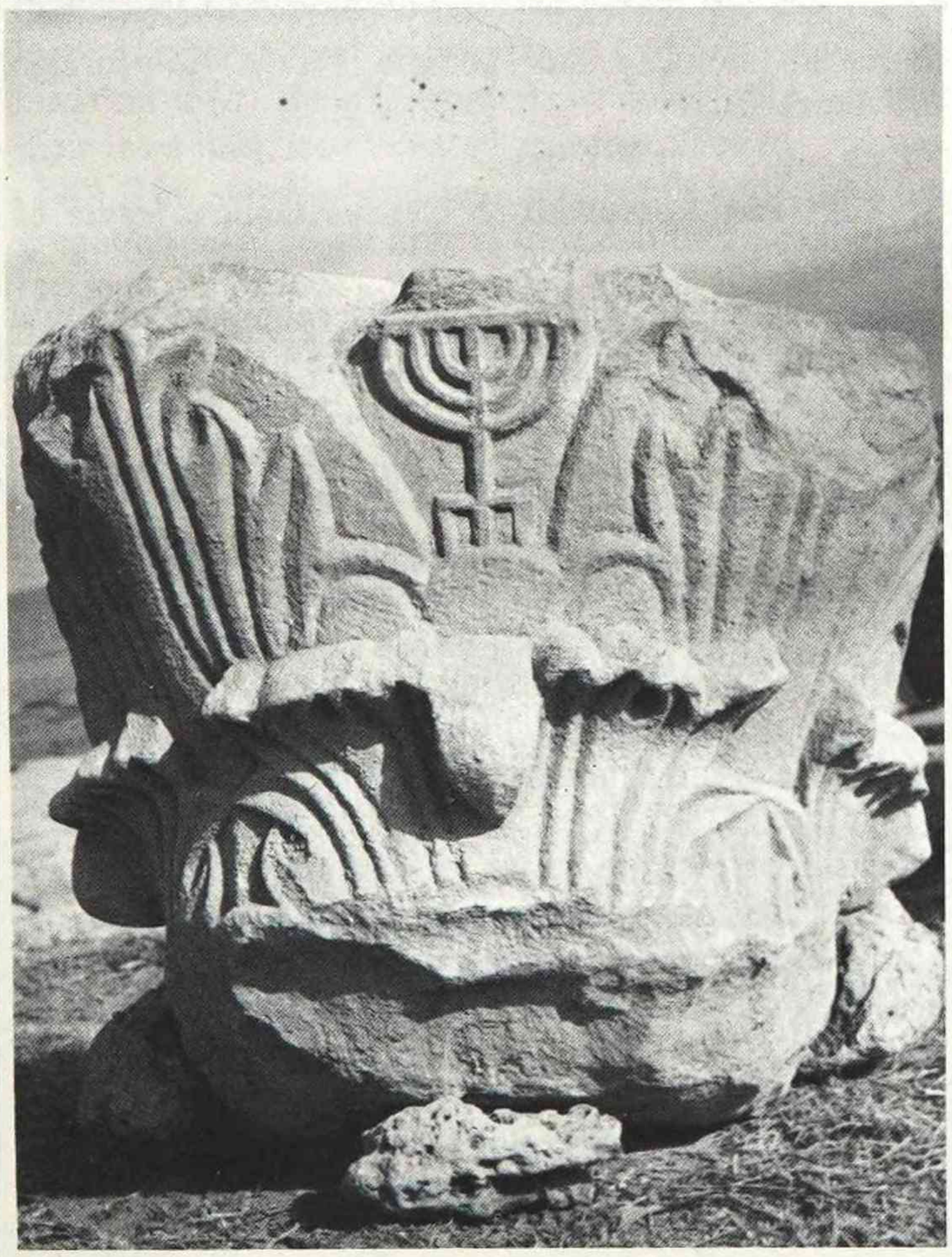
Chapter XIV

C. THE PROCURATORS

1. Festus and the turmoil in Judaea in AD 60–62

(271) Festus, who succeeded Felix as procurator, tackled the chief curse of the country; he captured a considerable number of the rebels and killed not a few [*a*]. (272) The administration of Albinus [*b*], who followed Festus, was different in nature; he was guilty of every possible form of villainy. (273) Not only content with official acts that sanctioned looting of private property, or with extraordinary taxes that crippled the whole nation, he also released those imprisoned for banditry by local councils, or by former procurators, on payment of ransom by their relatives. Thus, the only persons left in jail to serve their sentence were those who failed to pay the price [*c*]. (274) Now, too, the audacity of the revolutionaries in Jerusalem was stimulated. Its leaders bribed Albinus to shut his eyes to their seditious activities, while any of the common people who were not satisfied with peace and quiet joined forces with the procurator's associates [*d*].

Capital of a column in the synagogue



or dismiss the high priest, just as Herod of Chalcis had after the death of Agrippa I. Although he was in agreement with the priesthood in its general aims, Agrippa II's control provoked ill-will among them and other Jewish leaders in Jerusalem when he retained the right to supervise the Temple. He had increased the height of his palace that stood on the lower slopes of Mount Zion, west of the Temple, overlooking the sanctuary; he thus enjoyed the unique view in company with his sister, Queen Helene Bernice. This was regarded as a desecration of the holy place, whereupon the priests built a high wall to block out his view. Agrippa, supported by Festus, protested, the latter thinking that this hindered the Roman garrison from keeping the peace in Jerusalem at the turbulent festival times. A Jewish delegation came to Rome and found a supporter in the Empress Poppaea, a God-fearing sympathizer with Judaism. The decision was left to Nero who solved the matter by a compromise, allowing the wall to remain, but detaining the high priest Ishmael, who had come to Rome personally to plead his cause. This gave Agrippa a chance to make another appointment and replaced him with a series of high priests in rapid succession. Agrippa, like his father, motivated by his nationalistic tendencies, could never remain in lasting agreement with the Romans. Considering this fact, it is easy to understand how many contradictory elements there were to weaken the forces in favor of Rome. Moreover, the continual changes in the high priesthood symptomized clearly the weakness of the philo-Roman faction, and proved a cause of the final weakness in the high priesthood itself. In conclusion, it would appear that while the Romans ruled Palestine, they could count on the support of Agrippa II as well as that of many in the Sadducean party, and several aristocratic Hellenized Jews. However, their opposition came from the Zealots who since the time of Herod had been resisting the Romans and their Herodian clients. Under these circumstances, it might have been possible to control the Zealot nationalists, but in the Palestine of the first century AD, the social and economic climate was an added stimulation to the messianic agitation, and far too incendiary for the show of Roman power that normally sufficed. The Jews had shown before—as illustrated in former chapters—that there was a point where they would choose to resist the Romans to the end. The lesson was lost on Nero's procurators, Felix, Festus, Albinus, and Gessius Florus (277) who between AD 52–66 crushed mercilessly the Zealot guerillas, while exacting the last *sestertius* of tax from a land that, in addition to the normal tributes, was saddled with a certain poll tax that had even stirred discontent in Egypt.

272[*b*] *Porcius Festus* died in office according to *Antiq*. XX, 200 and was succeeded by *Albinus* (62–64). The interim between the change of procurators brought the short tenure of Ananus (the fifth of the high priest Ananus' sons), a typical Sadducean in outlook and in his leadership of the Sanhedrin, which now decided cases in accordance with the rigid Sadducean point of view. The Sanhedrin summarily condemned nonconformists and opponents, among whom was James, the brother of Jesus, who was the leader of Jerusalem's Judaeo-Christian community. The Pharisees protested to Agrippa and the new procurator, Albinus, while he was on his way to Jerusalem and argued that the high priest had exceeded his powers by convening the Sanhedrin to deliver a capital sentence without first obtaining the procurator's permission. Ananus had to be deposed only three month after he had taken office.

273[*c*]–274[*d*] Albinus soon discovered how to make money for himself. He agreed to release those imprisoned by previous procurators, or by the local Jewish authorities, as long as a ransom was paid by the prisoner's relatives. At first, he acted firmly against the Zealot Sicarii (254[*a*]) in an attempt to restore order; many were executed, but this merely served to increase the violence. It will be recalled that the Jewish circles considered worthy by the Roman administration were Herod's family and the upper ranks of the aristocracy. Albinus is known to have cooperated with the high priest, Ananus, the son of Nebedeus. The Sicarii were quick to exploit this. They began to attack persons in Ananus' circle in order to pressure Albinus to release others whom they had kidnapped among the priestly circles. This resulted in the release of a large number of prisoners, as related in *Antiq*. XX, 215. When Albinus heard of his supercession by his successor, Florus, he tried to forestall being indicted for extortion. In order to appease the populace, he opened the prisons and filled the country with terrorist Zealots.

276[*e*] *Anarchy in the city* Under Albinus there were frequent changes of high priests, and one of them, Jeshua, son of Danneus, would not accept dismissal and began struggling with his successor. The fight took to the streets when each rival surrounded himself with his henchmen, and eventually various groups were drawn into the quarrel, including relatives of Agrippa II (*Antiq.* XX, 213–214). Thus, Josephus' estimates of Albinus's work in *War* II, 272 and in *Antiq.* XX, 204 are at variance. Nevertheless, the facts related in the notes seem to justify the interpretation given in the text above.

278[*a*] Though his predecessors did find some points of social contact with the Jews in higher circles, and occasionally pretended to cooperate with them, Florus differed from these procurators, as he played the part of Judaea's tyrant in every respect. Even his relations with the Herodian dynasty seem to have been very uncordial, and neither Agrippa nor his sister Bernice appear to have had any influence with him. He simply justified his acts by claiming that the Jews were rebels against the emperor, and thus enemies of Rome, who automatically forfeited their privileges as citizens. Therefore, in many ways, Florus was far worse than Albinus, since he did not have any connection whatsoever with the Jewish upper classes, let alone with the ordinary people. He was the last procurator of Judaea before the First Revolt and his administration (AD 64–66) hastened the end which had clearly been foreshadowed in the previous procuratorships. The gulf between the Jews and Romans widened while tension among the people of Judaea reached a new and dangerous level.

279[*b*] At this point the corresponding narrative in *Antiquities* ceases (XX, 225–226) and it comes close to an end without relating the course of the disastrous years AD 60–70.

280[*a*] This is an impossible figure, but population statistics for Jerusalem in ancient sources are problematic. Both Josephus *Wars* VI, 422–424 and Talmudic sources (Talmud *Pessahim,* 64[*b*]) highly exaggerated the numbers of people in the city on the Passover festival, i.e. 2.5 to 3 millions. Hecateus of Abdera in the third century BC alredy speaks of 120,000 inhabitants. All these figures are exaggerations. Modern estimates have ranged from 80,000 to 200,000.

282[*b*]–283[*c*] This underlines Josephus' assertions that Florus' misdeeds were of a provocative nature; he planned to drive the Jews to rebellion and to prevent them from instigating any judicial examination of his office. It appears that the procurators were in no way inhibited by the presence in Judaea of other high-ranking Roman officials, as we read in 282.

284[*a*] *The status of Caesarea* The issue in the Jewish-pagan confrontation in Caesarea, according to L. I. Levine, was "the *isopoliteia,* the relationship between the Jews and the official Greek *polis.*" As recorded in *War* II, 226 ff., the issue involved was to whom the city belonged. This excluded the possibility that the conflict was between the Jewish and Syrian racial unions, or *politeuma* of Caesarea, and also left the main Greek *polis* and its assembly unaffected. Moreover, in the same paragraph Josephus calls the opponents of the Jews "Greeks" as well as "Syrians" (266), thus indicating that the terms are interchangeable. In contrast to *War,* Josephus refers to the other faction as "Syrians" throughout his account in *Antiquities.* The change may be due to his desire in this later work to dissociate the Jews from any conflict with the "Greeks" which might not find favor in the eyes of his Roman readers, and to characterize the Jews' opponents as merely local Syrians *(Caesarea Under Roman Rule, ibid.* pp. 28, 167). Levine argues that "from Josephus' account it is clear that the Jews initiated the struggle and on a number of cases escalated it. They claimed the city was theirs, because its founder was Jewish" (266–270). In *Antiq.* XX, 173 the pagan argue that before Herod, the city had been Strato's Tower, and that no Jews lived there. This, however, is a much weaker argument than that of *War* I, 396. However, the reorganization and rebuilding of a city and changing its name was equivalent to its foundation (*ibid.,* pp. 29, 168).

Their case had been brought before Nero's tribunal (270) and the decision must have been known for some time, possibly for a few years; but it led ultimately to the final tragedy in May AD 66 (*Antiq.* XX, 184).

284[*b*] *Artemisius* falls in spring in the Maccedonian calendar.

289[*a*] *Birds* This act probably implies that the Jews are lepers, since according to *Leviticus* 14, 2–9, before a leper could return to ordinary

(275) Every ruffian surrounded by his own gang stood out from his followers like a brigand-chief or tyrant, using his bodyguard to rob peaceful citizens. (276) The result was that the victims of robbery kept wrongs, of which they ought to have complained, to themselves, while those who escaped injury, through fear of the same fate, cringed to wretches who deserved punishment. In short, none could now speak freely, and tyranny reigned everywhere; from then on the seeds of the impending fall were sown in the city [*e*].

2. The excesses of Gessius Florus (AD 64–66)

(277) Such a man was Albinus, but by comparison his successor Gessius Florus made him appear an angel. The crimes of Albinus were, for the most part, perpetrated secretly and in disguise; Gessius, on the contrary, paraded the wrongs he did to the nation openly and, as if sent as public executioner to punish condemned criminals, indulged in every form of robbery and violence. (278) When pitiable things happened, he showed himself the most cruel of men; when disgraceful things, none was more shameless than he. No one ever did more to bring truth into disrepute; none thought out more subtle methods of crime. To make a profit out of individuals seemed to him too petty: he plundered whole cities, ruined whole communities, and virtually announced to the entire country that everyone might become a bandit if he chose as long as he himself received his share of the spoils [*a*]. (279) The result of his avarice was desolation upon all the cities; many people deserted their ancestral homes and sought refuge in foreign provinces [*b*].

3. The Jews' complaint to Cestius Gallus, legate of Syria

(280) As long as Cestius Gallus remained in Syria governing his province, no one dared even to send a deputation to complain of Florus; but when he visited Jerusalem on the occasion of the Passover, the people crowded around him—at least three million [*a*]—and implored him to pity the nation in its extreme distress, and loudly denounced Florus and the ruin of their country. (281) Florus who was present at Cestius' side derided their protests. Cestius, for his part, quieted the excited crowds by assuring them that he would guarantee greater moderation on the part of Florus in the future. (282) Then he returned to Antioch. But Florus escorted him as far as Caesarea, playing upon his credulity, and already considering war with the nation, his only hope of covering up his own crimes [*b*]. (283) For, if the peace lasted, he foresaw that he would have the Jews accuse him before Caesar; but if he contrived to make them revolt [*c*], he hoped that this greater outrage would forestall any inquiry into less serious offenses. So, to ensure a nationwide revolt, he added daily to their sufferings.

4. The uprising at Caesarea in AD 66 leading to war with Rome

(284) Meanwhile, the Greeks of Caesarea had won their case [*a*] at Nero's tribunal and secured control of the city: they brought back with them the decision in writing. War broke out in the twelfth year of Nero's reign, and the seventeenth of the reign of Agrippa in the month of Arteminius [*b*]. (285) The ostensible pretext for war was insignificant in comparison with the fearful disasters to which it led. The Jews in Caesarea had a synagogue alongside a plot of ground owned by a Greek of that city. They had repeatedly tried to purchase this plot, offering a price far exceeding its value. (286) Scorning their requests, the proprietor further insulted them by beginning to build upon the site and erect workshops, leaving the Jews a narrow and extremely awkward passage on the dividing line. Thereupon, some of the hot-headed youths proceeded to attack the builders and interfere with the construction. (287) When Florus put a stop to their acts of violence, the Jewish notables, among them John, the tax-collector, having no other way out, offered Florus a bribe of eight talents of silver to put a stop to the work. (288) Only he, in order to get hold of the money, promised them full cooperation, but as soon as the payment was in his hands, he left Caesarea for Sebaste, allowing communal strife to take its course as if he had sold the Jews a permit to fight it out.

5. (289) The next day was a Sabbath, and when the Jews assembled in the synagogue one of the mischief-makers of Caesarea had placed beside the entrance a large earthen vessel upside down and was sacrificing birds on it [*a*]. This infuriated the Jews, who felt that their laws had been violated and the place desecrated. (290) The steadier and gentler members of the congregation advised an appeal to the authorities, but the factious folk and youthful hot-heads burned for a fight. On their side, the Caesarean partisans stood waiting for them, for they had sent the man to sacrifice by prearrangement and thus they soon came to blows. (291) Jucundus, the cavalry officer detailed to prevent it, stepped forward, picked up the vessel and attempted to quell the riot. However, he was no match for the violence of the Caesareans. Thereupon, the Jews seized their scroll of Law [*b*] and returned to Narbata, a Jewish district sixty furlongs [*c*] from Caesarea. (292) Their leading men, twelve in number headed by John, waited upon Florus at Sebaste, where they bitterly complained of what had happened and implored him to help, tactfully reminding him of the matter of the eight talents [*d*]. Florus had them arrested and put them in prison on the ground that they had removed the scroll of Law from Caesarea [*e*].

6. The rebellion ignited by Florus' pillage of the Temple

(293) The news aroused anger in Jerusalem, even though passions were still kept under control. But

life, he had to undergo a ceremony of purification. An earthen vessel was filled with pure water and a bird was then slaughtered over this vessel, so that the blood dripped into the water. Next, another bird was thrust into the water alive; cedar-wood, red cochineal and hyssop were put into the water; then the live bird was released in the open country, the leper was sprinkled with water and was pronounced clean.

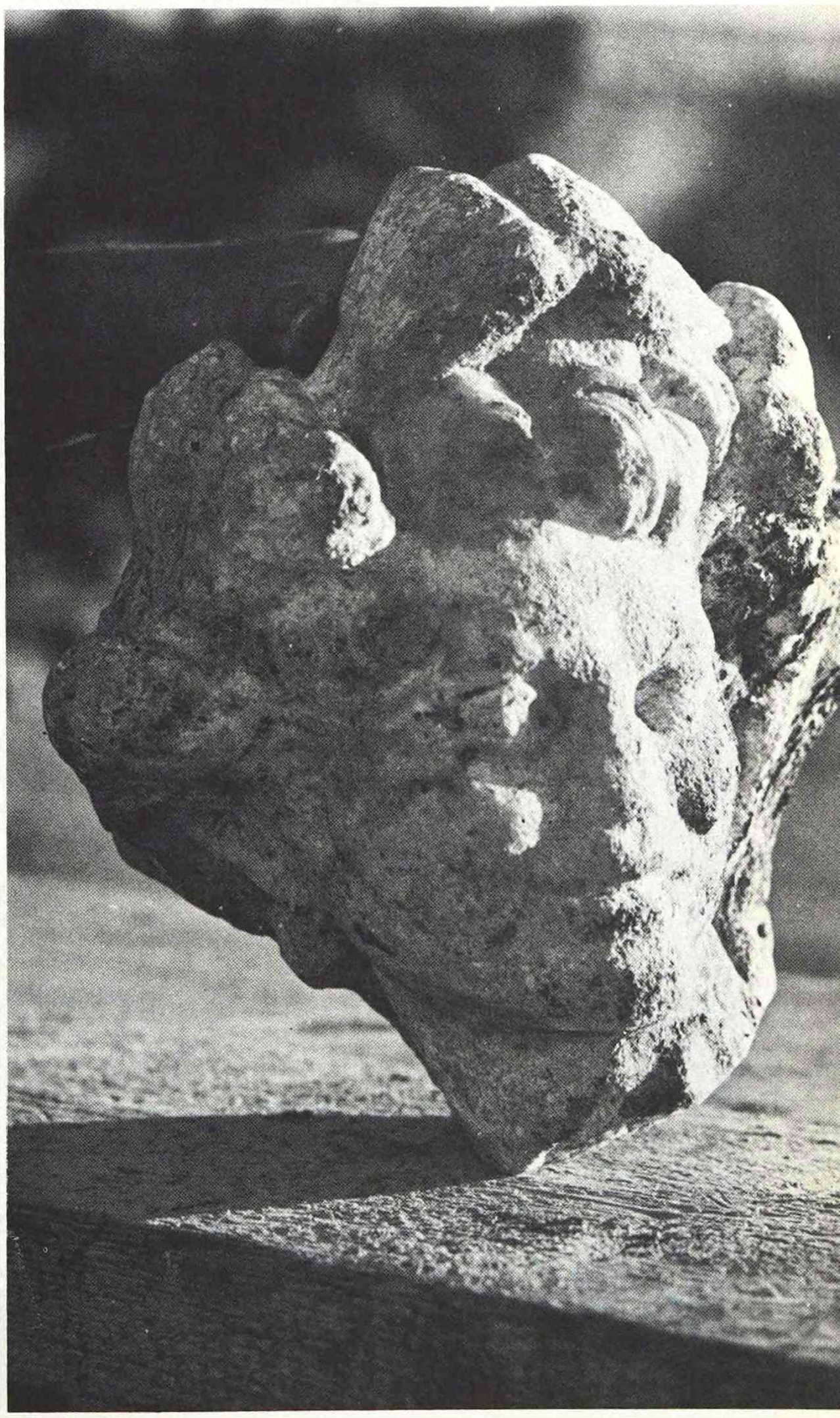
291[*b*] Scroll of Law *(Pentateuch)* or Torah.

291[*c*] *Narbata* This was in fact a fortified town (after which the toparchy was named) some 11.5 kms. from Caesarea, and a safe refuge for the scrolls. The sequel of the story and Narbata's historical significance in the war is related in note 509[*b*] below.

292[*d*] See 287.

292[*e*] Florus' reaction to the removal of the Torah scroll seems enigmatic. It was the most sacred object possessed by Jews, which is why they removed it in order to protect it. L. I. Levine suggests that Florus as a pagan, considered it one of the city's "protectors", sacred to the Jewish community, as an idol is to a pagan; thus its removal was considerd an evil portent as well as an illegal act.

Head of a Roman faun statue, typical of pagan traditions



293[*a*] *Florus' diabolical maneuver to trigger riots* He had obviously returned to the policy of a strong hand and he contrived in every way to 'make them rebel (see 283) and so gave the final impulse to the chain of riots which led to the rebellion. His confiscation of 17 talents from the Temple treasury may have been a partial recompense for alleged arrears of tribute; but this pretext, apart from having no legal basis, so shocked the religious sentiment of the people that they rioted.

296[*b*] He apparently had a single cohort at this stage.

296[*c*] And provoke rebellion.

301[*a*] Herod's Palace in the Upper City near the site of the Citadel (present-day Tower of David).

302[*b*] In reality the people were prepared to make peace with the procurator and to welcome honorably his soldiers.

305[*a*] The upper market is probably closed to the site of the later Ponian *Cardo Maximus,* the north-south thoroughfare of Jerusalem.

306[*b*] The heart of Jerusalem was crisscrossed by a maze of narrow alleys, as the present Old City still is.

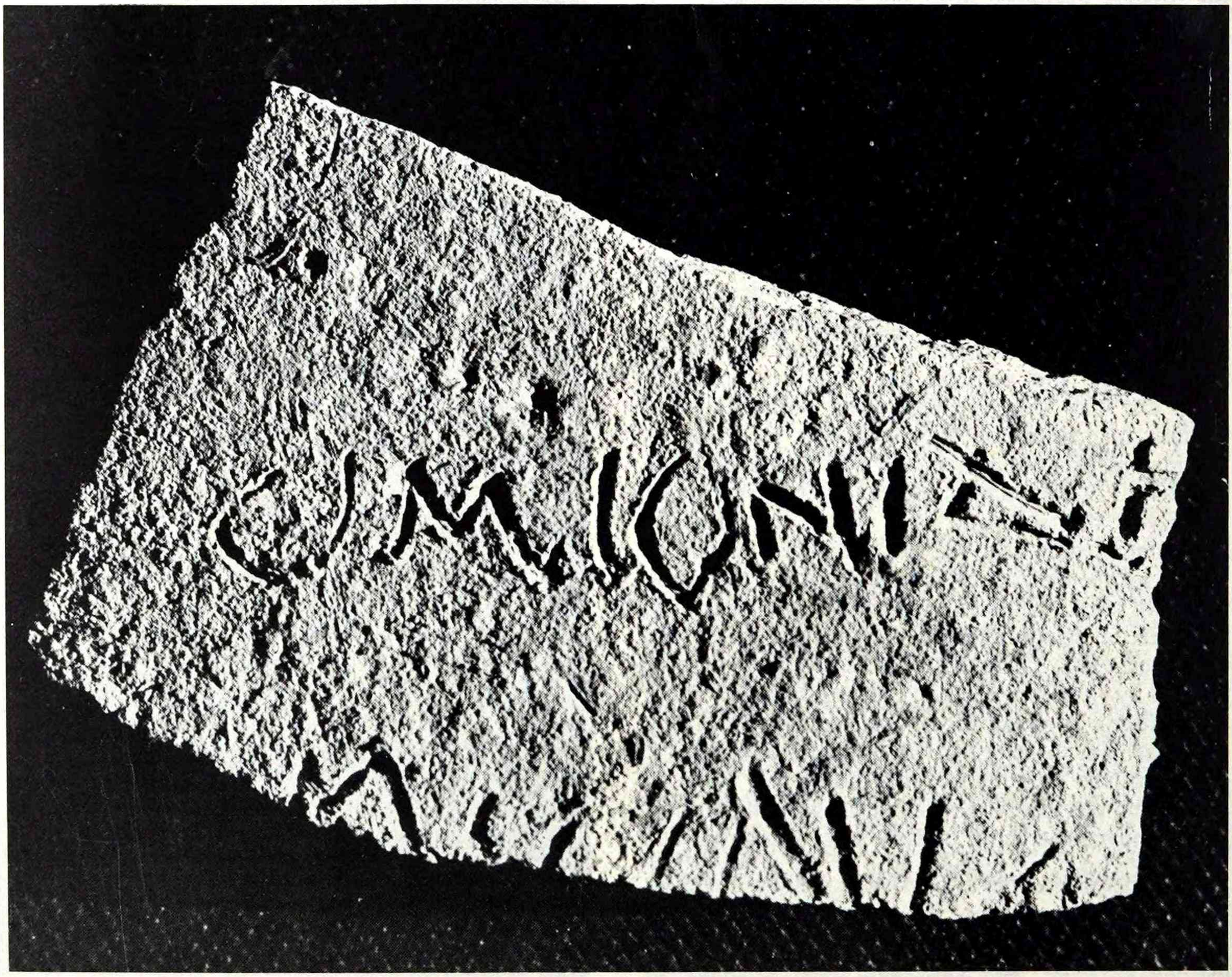
308[*c*] Jewish citizens of equestrian rank in Jerusalem who enjoyed Roman status. This casual remark throws new light on the complex composition of the Jewish urban population in Roman times.

Florus, as if he had been contracted to fan the war into flame, sent to the Temple treasury and removed seventeen talents on the pretext that the imperial service required it [*a*]. (294) Instantly, fired by the outrage, the people rushed in a body into the Temple where, with piercing yells, they called on the name of Caesar, imploring him to free them from the tyranny of Florus. (295) Some of the rioters shouted the most scandalous abuse at the latter, and went around with a basket, begging coppers for him as for the unfortunate destitute. This did not cure his avarice but only provoked him into further embezzlement. (296) Thus, instead of going as he should have done to Caesarea to extinguish the flames of war already breaking out there and to remove the cause of these disorders—as he had been paid to do—he marched with an army [*b*] of cavalry and infantry upon Jerusalem in order to attain his object by Roman arms [*c*] and, by means of intimidation and menaces, to fleece the city.

7. Florus' insult of the Jews of Jerusalem

(297) The people, anxious to make him ashamed of his attempt, went to meet the troops with acclamations

Greek inscription from Sebaste (Samaria)

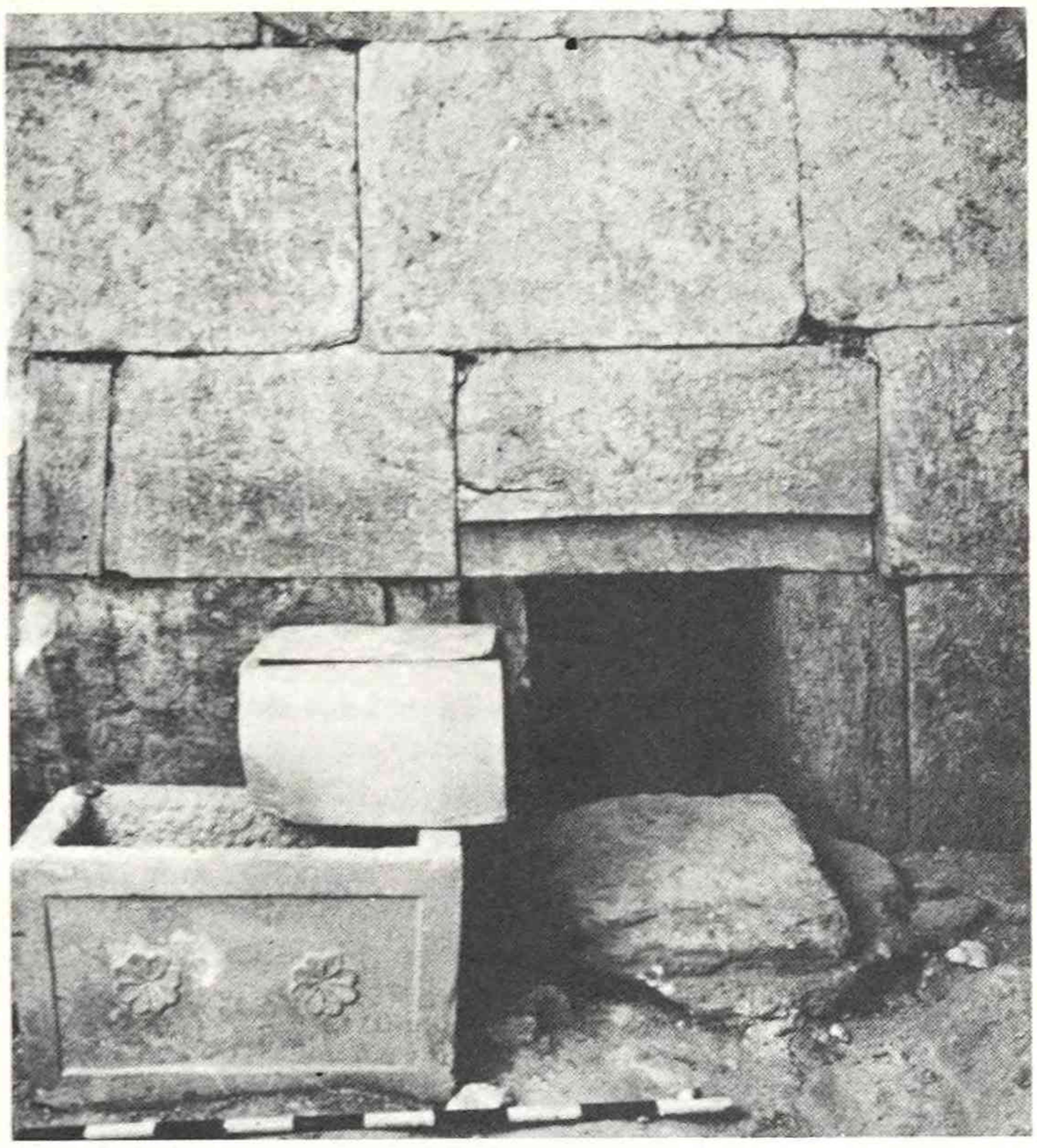


and prepared to receive Florus submissively. (298) However, he sent ahead a centurion, Capito, with fifty horsemen and ordered the Jews to retire and not to mock with this apparent cordiality the man whom they had abased so scandalously. (299) If they were fearless and outspoken (so ran his words), they ought to jeer him to his face and show by force of arms as well as words that they loved liberty. (300) Dismayed by this message and by Capito's cavalrymen charging into their ranks, the crowds dispersed before they could salute Florus or give the soldiers proof of their obedience. They went back to their homes and spent the night in fear and dejection.

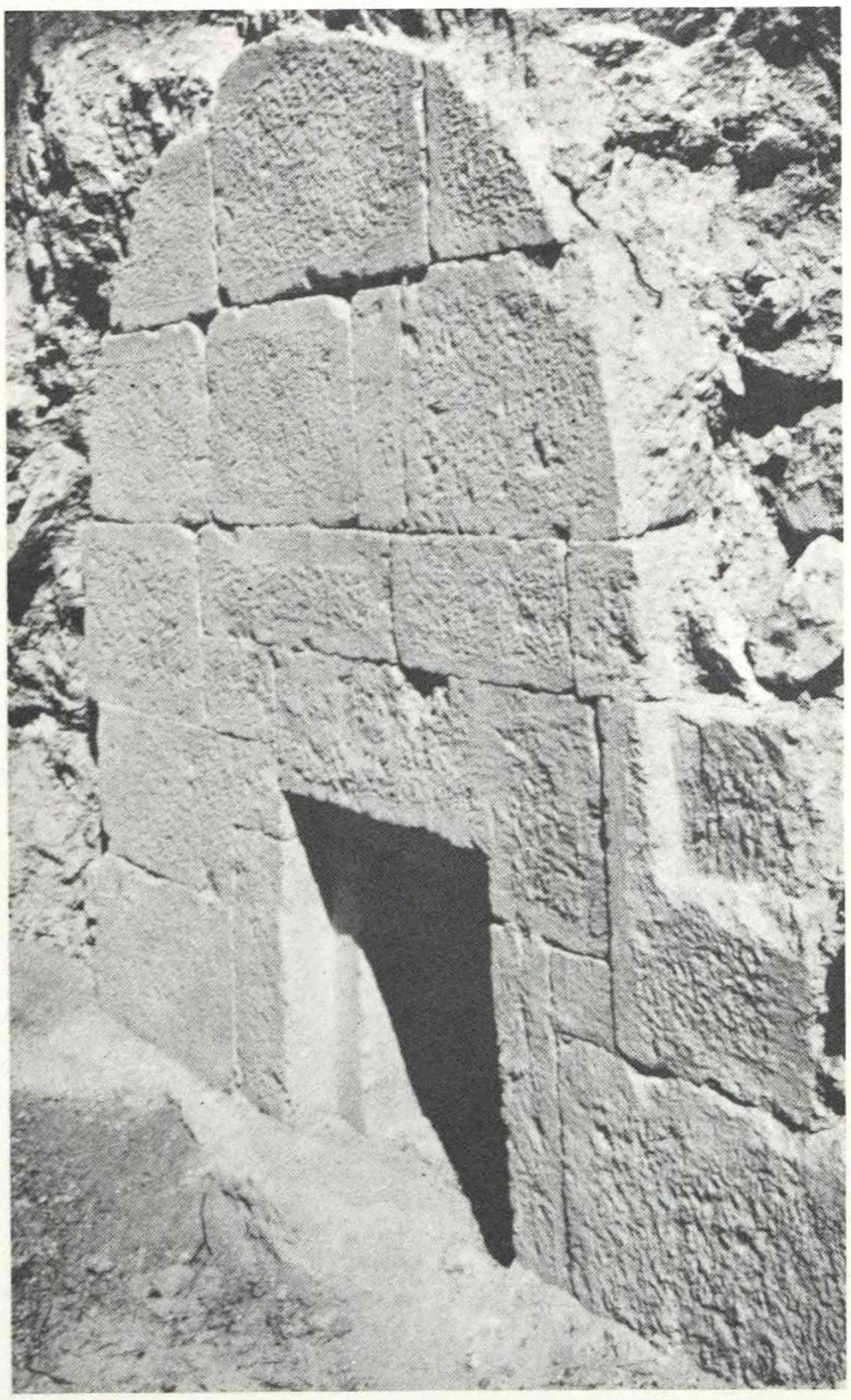
8. (301) Florus passed the night in the palace [*a*], and the next day had a tribunal placed in front of the building and took his seat; the chief priests, the notables and the most eminent citizens then lined up before this tribunal. (302) Florus ordered them to hand over the men who had abused him, declaring that they themselves would feel his vengeance if the culprits were not forthcoming. In reply, the leaders insisted that the people were peacefully disposed and apologized for those who had uttered offensive remarks [*b*]. (303) It was not surprising, they said, that in so great a crowd there were bound to be some reckless and impudent youths; and it would be impossible to pick out the villains when everybody was penitent and afraid to confess his guilt for fear of the consequences. (304) Therefore, if Florus cared anything for the peace of the nation and wished to preserve the city for the Romans, it would be better for the sake of the many innocent to pardon the few offenders, than because of a few rascals to bring trouble upon such a host of good citizens.

9. Florus' plunder of Jerusalem

(305) This plea made Florus still more furious, and he shouted to the soldiers to sack the so called "upper market" [*a*] and to kill any whom they met. The troops, whose lust for booty was stimulated by their general's order, not only sacked the quarter to which they had been sent, but plunged into every house and slaughtered the inmates. (306) There ensued a stampede through the narrow alleys [*b*], the massacre of all who were caught, and all sorts of ravage. Many of the peaceful citizens were seized and brought before Florus, who had them whipped first and then crucified. (307) The total number that perished that day, including women and children—for even infants were not spared—came to about three thousand six hundred. The disaster was made the more crushing by the unprecedented character of the Roman brutality. (308) No one had ever before dared to do what Florus did then—to whip men of equestrian rank [*c*] before his tribunal and nail them to the cross, men who were indeed Jews by birth but yet enjoyed Roman status.



Tomb of a nazir *on Mt. Scopus, Jerusalem (see 313[b])*



309[*a*] *Tiberius Alexander,* a Jewish convert and former procurator of Judaea (220).

313[*b*] *The custom of women Nazirites* Bernice was one of the women Nazirities. The Mishna tractate *Nazir* III, 6 states that the school of Rabbi Shammai prescribed thirty days of purification for Nazirites completing a vow in Palestine; the school of Rabbi Hillel was even more severe. Another known Nazirite was Miriam of Tadmor (Palmyra). Some Nazirites are mentioned on tombstones discovered in Palestine. It is said that they wore veils (two of which were prepared by 82 maidens). In a tomb discovered on Mount Scopus, two inscriptions on a sarcophagus relate to a man and his wife: "Hanania, son of Jonathan, the Nazirite," and "Salome, wife of Hanania, son of the Nazirite." This indicates that the head of the family was a Nazirite, that is, one under the obligation of the vow.

315[*a*] *The fatal beginning of the Jewish War* This occurred in the summer of AD 66, the moment, according to Josephus, when the war against Rome began. M. Avi-Yonah stressed that the fear of a recurrence of Caligula's attempt to desecrate the Temple and the land moved many of the Pharisees to join hands with the camp of the Zealots, who had fought Rome incessantly from the days of Judas the Galilean and his descendants. Apart from this, messianic aspirations were inducing the people to rebel against Rome too. The first spark was lit during the fighting between the Jews and the Greeks in Caesarea, which was then followed by the riots in Jerusalem, incited by Florus' brutal treatment which preceded the final explosion.

Queen Bernice, sister of Agrippa II. Bust found in Herculaneum (National Museum, Rome)

Chapter XV

1. Princess Bernice's ineffectual appeal to Florus

(309) At this time it happened that King Agrippa had travelled to Alexandria to congratulate Alexander [*a*], who had been entrusted recently with the government of Egypt by Nero. (310) Agrippa's sister, Bernice, however, who was in Jerusalem, witnessing the criminal conduct of the soldiers, was sorely troubled and repeatedly sent her cavalry commanders and bodyguards to Florus to beg him to put a stop to the slaughter. (311) But he, caring nothing for the number of the victims nor the high rank of the petitioner, but only for the profit he made out of the loot, turned a deaf ear to her appeals; the mad fury of the soldiers did not even spare the queen. (312) Not only did they torture their prisoners to death before her eyes; but they would have killed her also, had she not hastened to seek refuge in the palace and spent the night there with her guards, dreading an attack of the troops. (313) She was staying in Jerusalem to discharge a vow to God; it is customary for those who suffer from illness or some other distress to vow that, for thirty days before they intend to sacrifice, they will abstain from wine and shave their heads [*b*]. (314) These vows Bernice was there performing, and she appeared barefoot before the tribunal [*c*], appealing to Florus, but he showed her no respect and she went in danger of her life.

2. The Jewish war against Rome heralded by the events of May AD 66

(315) These events occurred on the 16th of the month Artemisius. [*a*] The next day the crowds, overcome with distress, flocked to the upper agora [*b*] lamenting with fierce cries for the dead. (316) But greater in number were the curses uttered against Florus; this alarmed the leading men and the chief priests, who rent their clothes and, falling down before one man after another of the mob, implored them to desist and not to provoke Florus to commit some new irreparable outrage after all they had suffered. (317) The crowd at once complied out of respect for the petitioners and in the hope that Florus would spare them further atrocities.

3. Two cohorts brought from Caesarea by Florus

(318) The extinction of the disturbance annoyed the procurator, and, in order to rekindle the flames, summoned the chief priests and leading citizens and told them that the people had one way of proving that they would not revolt again, namely, to go out and meet the troops coming up from Caesarea—two cohorts were on the way. (319) Then, while the people were still being collected, Florus sent word to the centurions of the cohorts to instruct their men not to return the salute of the Jews, and if they uttered a word in disparagement of himself, to use their weapons. (320) Meanwhile, the

chief priests assembled the crowd in the Temple [*a*], urging them to meet the Romans and to avert irreparable disaster by welcoming the cohorts courteously. This appeal the rebellious party refused to obey because of those who had fallen, and the crowd opted for those who favored a bolder policy.

4. (321) Thereupon every priest and every minister of God, bringing forward the sacred vessels and wearing the robes in which they were accustomed to perform their priestly office the harpers and choristers with their instruments, fell on their knees and implored the people to preserve for them these sacred ornaments and not to provoke the Romans to pillage the treasures of the house of God. (322) The chief priests themselves could be seen heaping dust on their heads, their breasts bared, their clothes rent. They appealed by name to each of the prominent citizens and collectively to the crowd, not by some trifling offense to betray their country to those who were eager to sack it. (323) "After all," they said, "what advantage would it be to the soldiers to be saluted by the Jews? What reparation for past wrongs would they obtain by now refusing to go out? (324) If, on the contrary, they gave those approaching the usual welcome, Florus would be deprived of all grounds for hostilities and they would gain for themselves their country and immunity from further disturbance. And then, above all, why should they give way to a handful of rebels, when, being such a numerous people, they should coerce even these malcontents to join in their own rational policy!"

5. Reception of the cohorts and a new collision

(325) With these arguments they succeeded in soothing the crowds while they quelled the rebels partly by menaces, and partly by appealing to their feelings of respect. Then, taking the lead, they went quietly and in good order to meet the troops and saluted them on their arrival. However, when these made no response, the rebels began to shout insults against Florus. (326) This was the agreed signal to attack the Jews. Immediately, the soldiers surrounded them and began to beat them with their cudgels; when they fled the cavalry pursued and trampled them under their horses' feet. Many fell, struck by the Romans but even more from the pressure of the crowd. (327) Around the gates the pushing was terrible. As each hurried to get in first, the flight was slowed down for everyone and dreadful was the end of those who stumbled. They were suffocated and mangled by the crowds who trod them down [*c*]; they were disfigured until they were unrecognizable even for their relatives when they came to give them burial. (328) The soldiers poured in with the fugitives, striking without restraint anyone they caught, and drove the crowd back through the quarter called Bezetha [*a*], trying to force their way through and seize the Temple and fortress of Antonia [*b*]. Florus, aiming at the same objective, led the men

315[*b*] *The upper agora,* or upper market in the Upper City, near the site of the governor's palace (or the Citadel formerly Herod's palace) where the govenor was usually seated on an ivory-plated curule chair set on a dais or tribunal, meaning the ruler's judgment seat; cf. 301.

320[*a*] On the courts of Temple Mount.

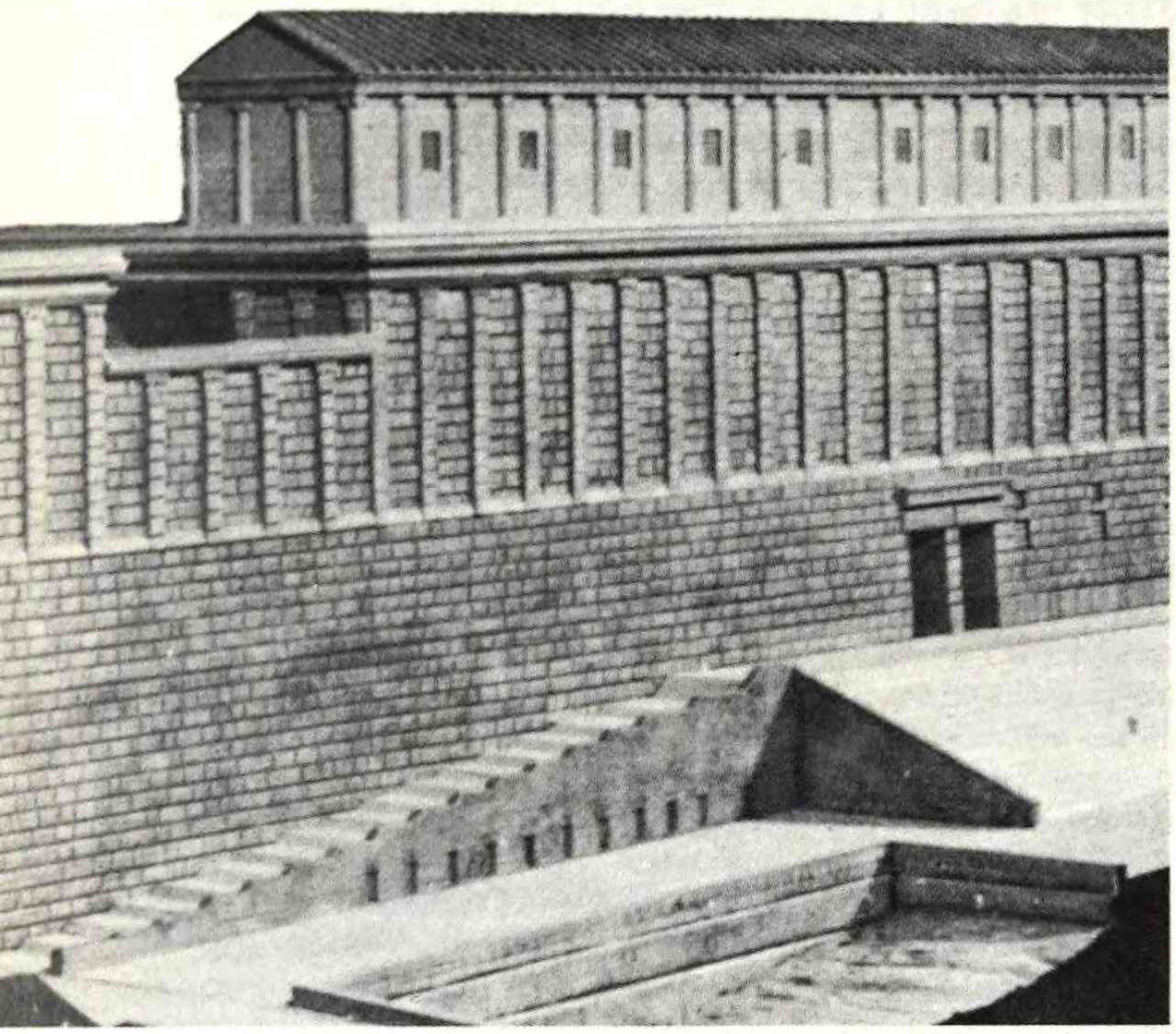
321[*b*] Priestly office conducted by Levites, Temple choirs and musicians.

327[*c*] See note 227 [*e*]. Some of the gates led to ingoing and outgoing passages to prevent crowding but this was of no avail during a panic.

328[*a*] *The massacre in the Bezetha quarter* In the encounter between the Jewish populace and the two chorots that Florus had brought from Caesarea, the troops pursued the Jews through the populous Bezetha quarter, situated in the northern part of the city (north and south of the present Damascus Gate area; see map).

328[*b*] During the outburst, the crowds succeeded in cutting the communications between the fortress of Antonia and the Temple, so that the troops had to retreat to their quarters in the Citadel. The latter is situated on the northwestern border of the Upper City, a few hundred m. away from the Antonia and Temple grounds, which face the eastern border of the city.

Many Jerusalem matrons such as Bernice were known to dress in the fashions of Roman ladies, namely a stole (robe) and a mantle known as the "pallo"



The royal Portico, situated south of the Temple

out from the court of the royal palace [*c*] and made a serious effort to reach the fortress. (329) But his attempt failed, for the people swung around to face him and blocked his advance, while others lined up on the roofs and kept the Romans under constant fire. Overwhelmed by the falling missiles and incapable of hacking their way through the crowds that blocked the narrow alleys, the soldiers beat a retreat to their camp adjoining the palace.

6. The Jews' destruction of the porticoes; Florus' evacuation of Jerusalem

(330) The Jewish revolutionaries, afraid that Florus would return to the attack and seize the Temple by way of the fortress Antonia, instantly mounted the porticoes [*a*] that linked the two buildings and cut the connection [*a*]. (331) This maneuver cooled the cupidity of Florus; for it was the treasures of God that he coveted and for this reason he was anxious to reach Antonia, and now that the porticoes were broken down, his ardor was checked. He sent for the chief priests and the Council [*b*], and told them that he would quit the city and leave them whatever garrison they thought fit. (332) In return, they undertook to maintain perfect order and to prevent any uprising, provided that he left them one cohort, but not the one which had fought [*c*], as the people hated it because of what it had done to them. Accordingly, he changed the cohort as requested, and with the rest of his forces went back to Caesarea.

Chapter XVI

1. An emissary send by Cestius to investigate the situation

(333) Providing a further stimulus to hostilities, Florus now sent a report to Cestius, falsely accusing the Jews of revolt, alleging that they had been the aggressors in the recent fighting, and charging them with crimes of which they had in reality been the victims. However, the magistrates of Jerusalem did not remain silent; they also wrote to Cestius, and Bernice wrote too on the subject of the crimes perpetrated upon the city by Florus. (334) Cestius read the communications from both parties and consulted his officers. They advised him to go up to Jerusalem himself with an army, either to punish the authors of the revolt, if there was one, or to confirm the Jews in their allegiance if they still remained loyal to Rome. The governor, however, decided first to send one of his colleagues to examine the situation and to present a reliable report to him on the state of Jewish feeling. (335) He accordingly sent the tribune Neapolitanus, who met King Agrippa at Jamnia [*d*] on his way home from Alexandria, and informed him who had sent him on this mission and what its object was.

328[*c*] Florus tried also to reach the Antonia from the Citadel in the Upper City, but in their retreat his troops were almost overwhelmed by the missiles thrown at them from the roofs lining the narrow alleys leading to the Palace and Citadel.

330[*a*] Communications were cut between the Antonia and the Temple when the southern porticoes were destroyed. As shown in the diagram, porticoes surrounded all four sides of the vast Temple esplanade and the western portico abutted the Antonia at the northern end.

331[*b*] *The Council* referred to is the *Boule* or the municipal administrative association (also mentioned in Mark 15, 1 and the Palestinian Talmud *Ta'anit* IV, 19 [*b*]; and referred to below (336 and 405). The site of the bouleuterion (seat of the Boule) and the Records office *(Arkhaia)* is identified by some authorities with the "Hall of Hewn Stone" where the Sanhedrin used to meet before it was transferred to the upper *"Ḥanūyoth,"* the basilic-like southern or Royal Portico (B. Mazar, p. 213). This "Council" must not be confused with the *Grand Sanhedrin* that functioned both as a supreme court and a legislature. Its site has not been identified; it may be south of the Xystus (cf. 344 [*a*]; *War* V, 144).

332[*c*] The cohort brought by Florus himself into Jerusalem (296 [*b*]) and that had plundered the upper agora (315). Florus had left in the city one of the two cohorts which had arrived from Caesarea.

335[*d*] *Jamnia* (Hebrew, *Jabneh*), was situated southwest of Jerusalem and along the route on which King Agrippa was expected to arrive from Egypt. Neapolitanus proceeded there to meet the King.

2. Neapolitanus' inquiry at Jerusalem

(336) To Jamnia too came the chief priests of the Jews, the leading citizens and the Council to welcome the king. After paying homage to him, they proceeded to bewail their own calamities and to describe the savagery of Florus. (337) Agrippa was angered by the narrative, but he discreetly turned his indignation upon the Jews whom he pitied inwardly, wishing to humble their pride and, by appearing to disbelieve that they had been ill-treated, to divert them from revenge. (338) They, being men of standing, and property-owners with a personal interest in peace, understood the benevolent intentions of the king's rebuke [*a*]. But the people of Jerusalem came out to a distance of sixty furlongs [*b*] to welcome Agrippa and Neapolitanus: (339) the widows of the slain ran ahead uttering piercing cries, and the people responded with lamentations. They implored Agrippa to help them and loudly declaimed to Neapolitanus all Florus had done to them. When they entered Jerusalem the Jews pointed to the scene of desolation in the agora [*a*] and the plundered houses. (340) Then, with Agrippa's help, they persuaded Neapolitanus with one attendant to make a tour of the city as far as Siloam [*d*], in order to see for himself that the Jews were submissive to all other Romans and only bitter against Florus because of the appalling cruelty with which he had treated them. Going through the city, Neapolitanus satisfied himself as to the docile temper of the inhabitants and went up to the Temple. (341) There he called the multitude together, praised them highly for their loyalty to Rome, and emphatically urged them to keep the peace; then after paying honor to the sanctuary of God, from the permitted area [*c*], he returned to Cestius.

3. The citizens' entreaty for an embassy to Rome

(342) The Jewish populace now turning to the king and the chief priests urged them to send an embassy to Nero to denounce Florus, and not to remain silent after so frightful a massacre which would leave the Jews under suspicion of starting a revolt. For they would be thought to have started hostilities if they did not take prompt measures to denounce the real aggressor. (343) It was evident that they would not take it quietly if anyone tried to oppose the proposed embassy. Agrippa realized that to choose men to accuse Florus would be odious, but he realized also the danger, even to himself, of letting the flames now smoldering among the Jews break out into war. (344) So he summoned the crowd into the Xystus [*a*] and placed his sister Bernice conspicuously on the palace of the Hasmoneans [*b*] which stood above Xystus on the opposite side of the upper town; the Xystus was connected with the Temple by a bridge [*c*]. Then Agrippa delivered the following speech:

338[*a*] Agrippa's rebuke or reprimand to the people seems a strong term under the tragic circumstances, but Josephus tries to indicate that the king was placed in a difficult position, torn between love of the people and his abiding desire to avoid war at any cost. His forthcoming speech (345) illustrates this dilemma abundantly.

338[*b*] 60 furlongs = 7 miles (11.5 kms).

339[*a*] The *agora* is the market-place referred to above (Florus' massacre).

340[*b*] *Siloam* refers to the Pool of Siloam at the extreme southern end of the Lower City and this ended Neapolitanus' stroll through the populated lanes of the city.

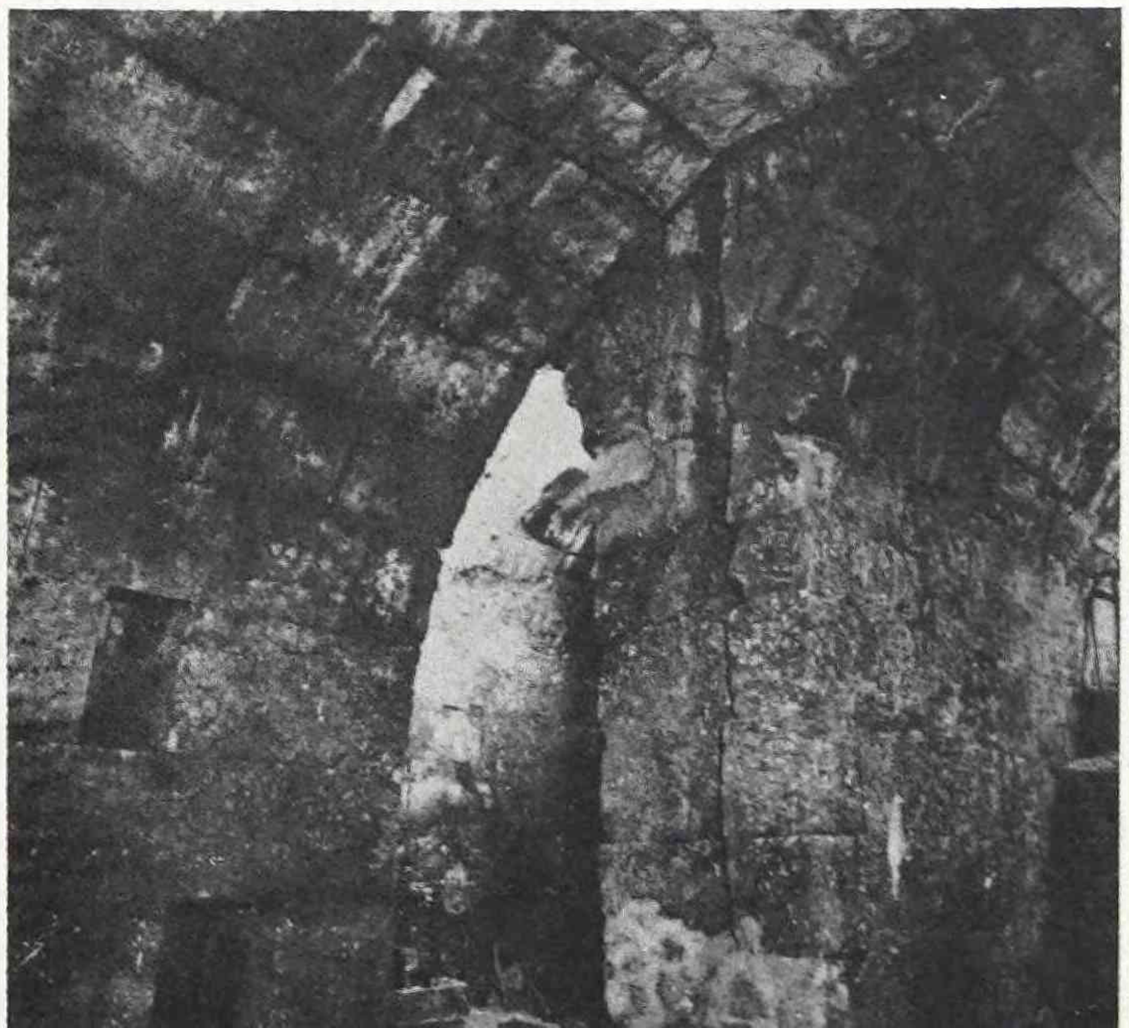
341[*c*] *Gentiles could not go beyond the balustrade* Pagans were not allowed to come close to the sanctuary for fear of polluting the sacred shrine by their (impure) presence; they could go no further than the balustrade (*Soreg* in Hebrew), "a low latticed wall about 1.5 m. high marking the border of the inner sanctuary. At regular intervals were placed elegant *stelae*, carved stone slabs, bearing inscriptions in Greek and Latin, prohibiting Gentiles from entering the sacred internal courts... it warned against transgressing on holy ground on pain of death" (B. Mazar, *ibid.*, p. 114). Two such stelae which were discovered are illustrated as well as a diagram of the outer and inner courts of the Temple Mount (See Book V).

344[*a*] *The Xystus, or the people's assembly hall* "This compound appears to have been an open-air porticoed plaza paved with polished flagstones, along the Tyropoeon road, situated a little below the third and fourth (western) gate; (*War* V. 144; *War* VI, 191, 325, 377). It was used for public assemblies.... The Xystus was probably the site of the earlier Hellenistic gymnasium (II *Maccabees* 4, 9) which was no longer in use during the Herodian period" (B. Mazar, *ibid.*, p. 215). The gymnasium turned into a meeting hall as described in the note to V, 145.

344[*b*] *The palace of the Hasmoneans* stood to the west of the Xystus and higher up on the Western Hill that commanded a full view of the Temple Mount. This section of Jerusalem housed the palatial structures of the high priests and the nobility of Jerusalem. In recent years, it has been partly excavated by N. Avigad as illustrated below (*War* V and VI).

344[*c*] The *bridge* was a causeway that spanned the Tyropoeon road above the Xystus. The causeway is identified with the Wilson Arch. The visible top of this Arch leans against the Herodian Western Wall, near the Xystus. "The Wilson Arch area now used as an assembly place is the last and upper end of a series of arches supporting the causeway which spanned the Tyropoeon valley and brought water to the Temple Mount... by gravity from the Ein-Etam spring" (B. Mazar, *ibid.*, 217).

One of the arches which supported an aqueduct over Tyropoeon road which abutted on the western Temple wall area covered the Xystos as well. This was an assembly hall once used as the Hellenistic museum in pro-Hasmonean times referred to in the opening paragraphs of Book I, 32 ff.



345[*a*] Agrippa's speech was designed to impress on the Jews how irrational it was to rebel. According to the arguments that Josephus puts into his mouth, any other course would have been "a foolish one".

352[*b*] Admittedly, it was difficult to keep a close check on the activities of the provincial administrators. Agrippa, when trying to pacify the crowds, stated that the emperor was unaware of Florus' misdeeds. On the other hand, a provincial governor above him could indict him for extortion; but according to Roman procedure, the governed could not bring to court anyone who was still occupying a public post. To bring Florus to court they had to wait until after he had completed his term. Cumanus, for instance, was sentenced to exile after he had been dismissed (223–246).

354[*c*] Florus had no successors and he was the last of the procurators. His atrocities touched off the Great War.

358[*a*] *Did Agrippa deliver such an elaborate speech?* In the speech, which Josephus puts into Agrippa's mouth and in his elaborate survey of the legionary forces at the disposal of the Roman *imperium* (designed to impress on the Jews the folly of rebellion), Agrippa is made to recite a methodical dissertation worthy of a well-versed historian. Yet he could hardly have delivered such an accurate and all-embracing speech. Not that the general theme in itself did not represent Agrippa's views as a whole (a view which matched Josephus' in principle), but whatever he actually said, he was not a man to elaborate to the extent indicated in Josephus. The technical elements and contents of such a dissertation were far above the heads of the Jerusalem populace he was addressing. The whole speech, in fact, reflects Josephus' summing-up of the situation in the light of *his* own knowledge accumulated *after* the Great War, a précis which he could write in Rome from the vantage point of an historian looking back on the war and summing it up in his own terms.

358[*b*] *Xerxes' defeat at Salamis* The allusion is to Xerxes, the Persian emperor, who "marched the sea" when his army crossed from Asia Minor into Europe at the Hellespont, and "sailed the land" when his forces traversed the canal of Athos. Xerxes was ultimately defeated by the Greeks at Salamis in 480 BC. And yet, this proud Greece turned out to be the docile vassal of Rome.

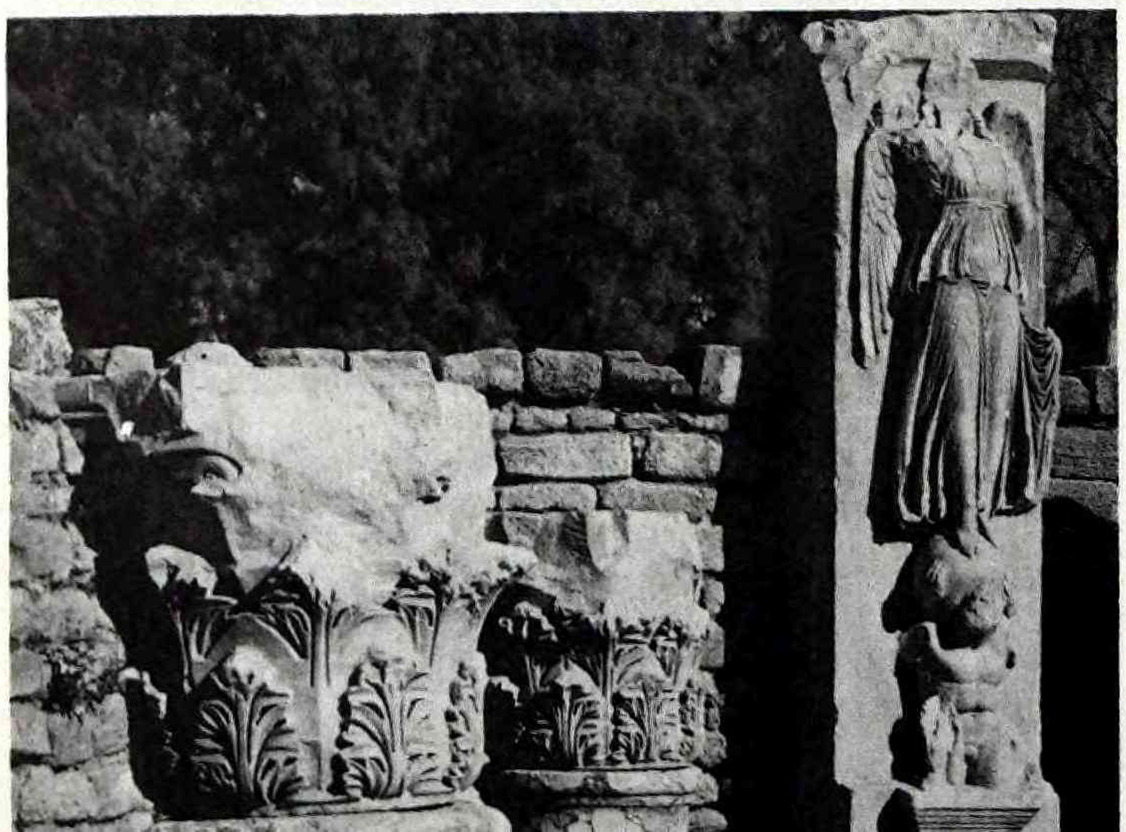
359[*c*] *Thermopylae* was the celebrated pass between Mt. Oeta and the sea in eastern Greece, and the scene of the epic battle between the Persians and Spartans in 480 BC. *Plataea* was the final Greek land victory over Persia in 479 BC.

359[*d*] *Agesilaus,* King of Sparta, was engaged in Asia Minor against the Persian Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus (early fourth century BC) until recalled by a domestic crisis.

360[*a*] The *Macedonians,* led by Philip, father of Alexander the Great, planned to unite all the Greek *poleis* (autonomous cities) and lead an expedition to liberate the Greek *poleis* in Asia Minor from Persian domination. Yet Philip was assassinated; his generals rose to his son's support and Alexander consolidated his domination over Greece and then conquered Persia.

360[*b*] *Her,* the goddess Fortune.

The goddess of Fortune, typified by Tyche; statue found at Ascalon in Judaea



4. Agrippa's speech on the folly of rebellion

(345) "If I found you all bent on war with the Romans, instead of seeing that the most honest and sincere section of the community is determined to preserve the peace, I should not have come forward to address you, nor ventured to offer advice; for it is a waste of breath to say anything in favor of a wise course when the audience is unanimously in favor of a foolish one [*a*]. (346) But some of you are young men with no experience of all the horrors of war, while others have irrational hopes of regaining independence, and yet others are led on by avarice and the prospect of enriching themselves at the expense of the weak in the event of a general explosion. So in the hope of bringing these misguided persons to reason and changing their attitude, and to prevent the folly of a few to be visited on good citizens, I deemed it my duty to call you all together and tell you what I think is in your best interest. (347) If my remarks are not to someone's liking, pray let him not create a disturbance. For those who have irrevocably made up their mind to rebel will be free to feel the same after my exhortations; but my words will be lost even on those who are anxious to hear my views, unless you all give me a quiet hearing.

Motives for war confused

(348) "Now I know that many orate against the insolence of the procurators and pronounce pompous eulogies of liberty; but for me, before I examine who you are and whom you are planning to fight, I must first sort out two distinct pretexts for hostilities which have been confused. (349) For if you intend to avenge your wrongs, what good is it to extol liberty? On the other hand, if servitude seems unbearable, it is unnecessary to complain about your rulers; if they were the most considerate of men, servitude would still be disgraceful. (350) Consider these arguments one at a time, and see how feeble, on either ground, are your arguments for war. First, the charges against the procurators: the authorities should be conciliated by flattery, not provoked; (351) when for minor errors you indulge in exaggerated reproaches, it is yourselves you hurt by your denunciation of those you incriminate; instead of injuring you secretly as before, and shamefacedly, they will now despoil you openly. (352) Nothing thwarts aggressiveness like submission, and the resignation of the wronged victim humiliates the wrongdoer. I grant that the ministers of Rome are unbearably harsh, but it does not follow that all the Romans are unjust to you any more than Caesar. Yet it is against them, against him that you are going to war. It is not by their wish that an oppressive governor comes from them to us, nor can they see in the west their officers in the east [*b*]; yonder, it is not easy even to hear promptly the news from these parts. (353) It would be absurd because of one man to make

Ancient Jewish tombs in the Ophel sundered by later Roman quarrying

The forum and ruins of Gerasa (modern Jerash in Jordan). The prosperous city was formerly part of the Decapolis (ten-city union) formed in 63 BC. Its Jews, as indicated in the text, were protected by the gentile Greeks during the great war with Rome (cf. 466)

The theater of Scythopolis (Bethshean) built by the Romans in the 2nd century AD. It seated 9,000 people (cf. II. 466–468)

war on so many and because of small charges to take arms against so mighty a power—a power which does not even know the nature of our complaints! (354) The grievances that we charge them with can be put to right quickly; for the same procurator will not remain forever; and it is probable that his successors will show more moderation on taking office [*c*]. But once set in motion, war cannot easily be either broken off or fought through without risk of disaster.

5. Passion for liberty tardy

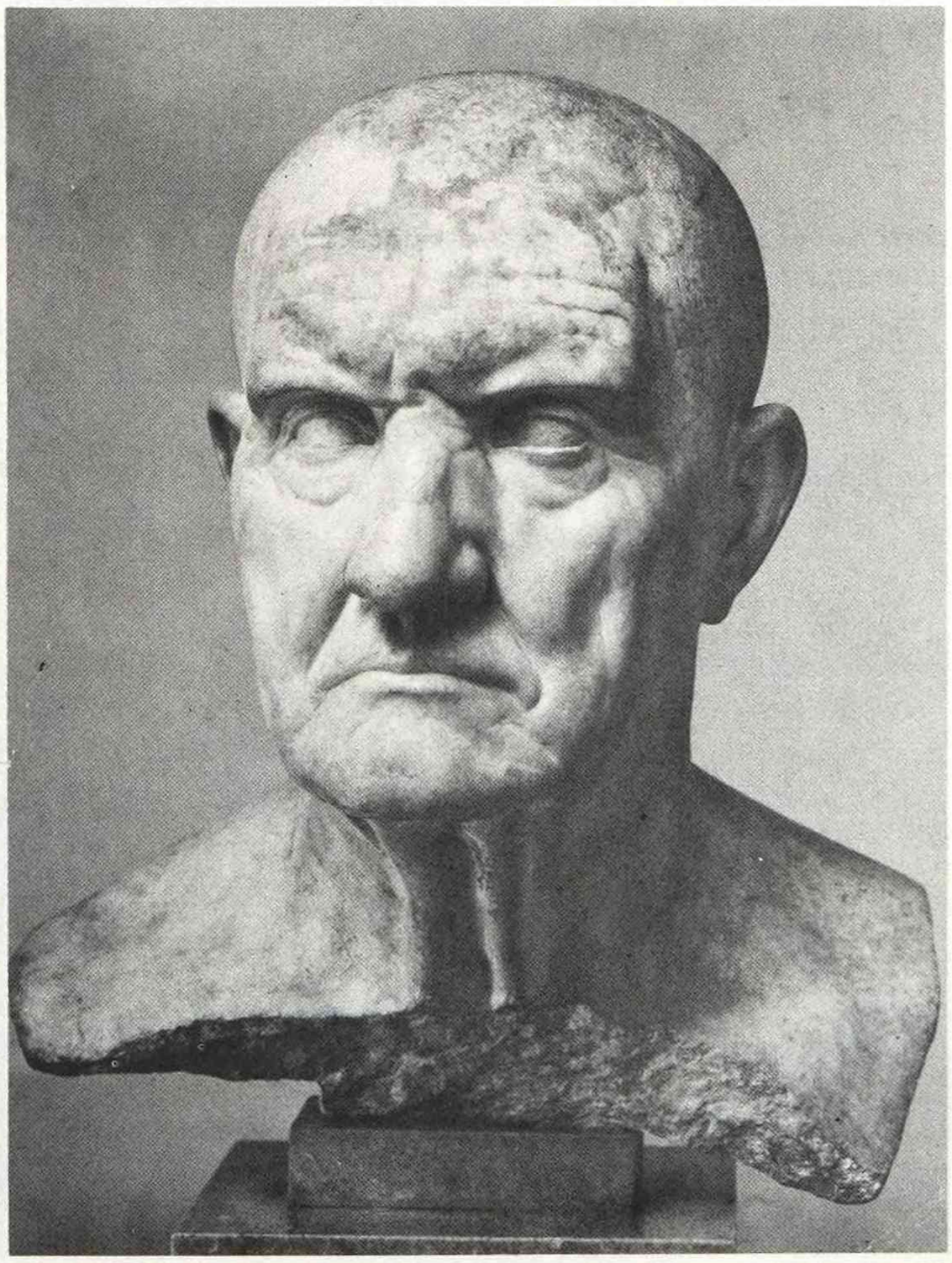
(355) "As for your passion for liberty, I say that it comes too late; the time is past when you ought to have striven never to lose it. (356) For the experience of servitude is painful and a struggle to avoid it altogether is justifiable, but the man who having once submitted then revolts is an insubordinate slave, not a lover of liberty. There was, to be sure, a time when you should have done everything possible to keep the Romans out; that was when the country was invaded by Pompey. (357) But our ancestors and their kings with material resources and physical and mental strength far superior to yours, nevertheless failed to mount a resistance to a small fraction of the Roman army; and will you, who have learned submission from your fathers and you, who are so ill-provided in resources compared with those who first submitted, defy the whole Roman Empire?

The states that submitted to Rome: Athens, Sparta, Macedonia

(358) "Look at the Athenians [*a*] who to preserve the liberty of Greece once consigned their city to the flames; the men, before whose pursuit the proud Xerxes, who marched the sea and sailed the land [*b*], for whom the deep was too narrow and whose army overran Europe, fled like a fugitive slave on a single galley; the men who near little Salamis broke the enormous might of Asia. These men are today subject to Romans, and the city that was queen over Greece is governed by orders from Italy! (359) Look at the Lacedaemonians; after Thermopylae and Plataea [*c*], after Agesilaus [*d*] who explored Asia, they are content to serve the same masters. (360) Look at the Macedonians [*a*] who still cherish Philip in their imagination, and see visions of her [*b*] who with Alexander sowed for them the seeds of the empire of the world; yet they have submitted and endure this reversal of fate and bow before those to whom Fortune went over. (361) Other nations by the thousands, much more outspoken in their struggle for freedom, have yielded. And will you alone disdain to serve the masters of the whole world? What are the troops, what are the weapons you count on? Where is your fleet that is to conquer the Roman seas? Where are the funds to meet the cost of your campaigns?

Roman legionaries

The bust of a Roman reflects the image of a harsh and cruel person; such was Florus, hated by the Jews for good reason



363[a] *Ister*, the River Danube.
363[b] *Gades*, Cadiz in Spain.
364[c] *Gauls*, the Celts, ancestors of the French people; a description of Gaul's wealth is given in note 372[a]. See map of the Roman imperium.
365[a] *Six rods—the lictor's fasces*—symbol of authority, was an ax surrounded by rods. Greece, called Achaea by the Romans, was a senatorial province governed by a proconsul of praetorian rank, attended by six lictors.
365[b] *The Macedonians*, north of Greece, represented another senatorial province.
366[c] *Asia*, meaning Asia Minor (including Cilicia, Pisidia, Cappadocia, Phrygia, Mysia and other densely populated provinces in the map). Asia was a senatorial province with a governor of consular rank.
366[d] *Fasces* Symbol of authority.
366[e] The *Colchians*, members of the Heniochi tribe, lived on the southeastern and eastern coast of the Black Sea (see map).
366[e] The *Taurians* inhabited the Tauric Chersonese or modern Crimea.
366[f] The *Euxine* or Pontus was the navigable Black Sea, and it provided the Romans with easier access to the northern Balkans, the provinces of the Danube and southern Russia, the Caucasus, as well as Armenia. This was a far easier means of communication than the rough and long land routes. The Euxine Sea needed a vigilant policy as piracy had always been prevalent in its waters. When, after AD 64 the responsibility for keeping it in check was taken over by the Romans, they formed a Pontic fleet, eventually numbering forty ships.
366[g] *Maeotis*, the Sea of Azov.
367[h] In this survey of legionary forces, Josephus explains that Rome virtually incorporated the Bosporus, the kingdoms around the Black Sea, and the Caucasian coast, east of the Black Sea. Neither Josephus nor Agrippa in AD 66 (during the reign of Nero) could have had access to details of the military situation around the Black Sea from contemporary records of Nero's court. Evidently, Josephus' information was plainly drawn from an official source which he had use of in Rome after AD 70 in the reign of Vespasian or Titus.
368[a] These provinces and Cilicia are all in Asia Minor.
368[b] Thracians in the northeastern part of the Balkans (see map) was converted into a Roman province in AD 46.

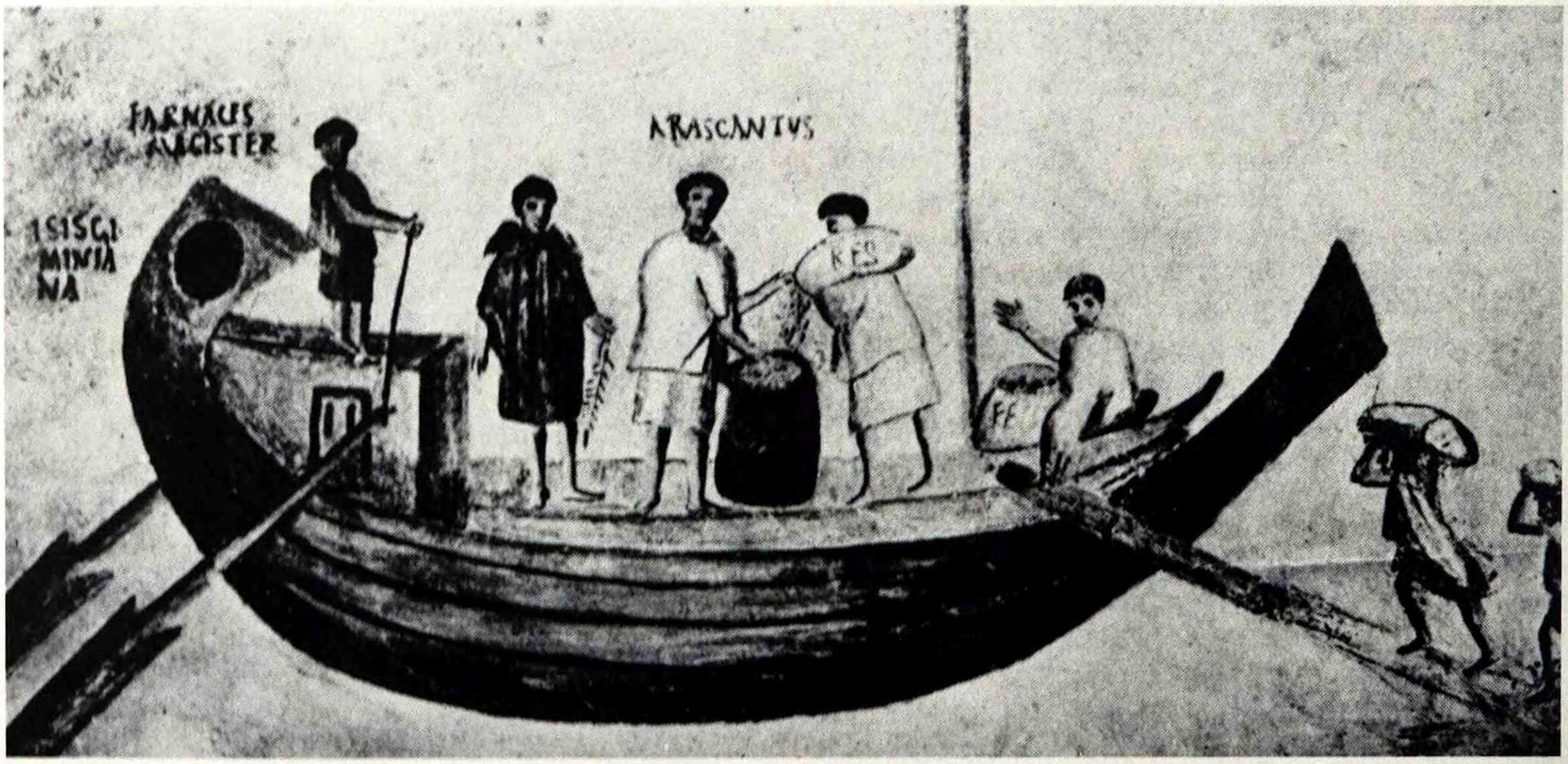
The folly of comparing their own resources to those of Rome

(362) "Do you think you are going to war with Egyptians and Arabs? Will you shut your eyes to the might of the Roman Empire and refuse to take the measure of your own impotence? Have not our forces been beaten even by our neighbors again and again, while their arms have been invincible over the whole world? (363) Nay, they even desired for more than this world. For, not content with having the Euphrates as their frontier in the east, the Ister [a] in the north, Libya explored into desert regions in the south, or Gades [b] in the west, they have sought a new world beyond the ocean and carried their arms as far as Britain, unknown previously to history. (364) Let me ask you, then, are you richer than the Gauls [c], stronger than the Germans, more clever than the Greeks, more numerous than all the nations of the world? What is it that gives you confidence to defy the Romans?

An impressive list of nations that bowed to Rome

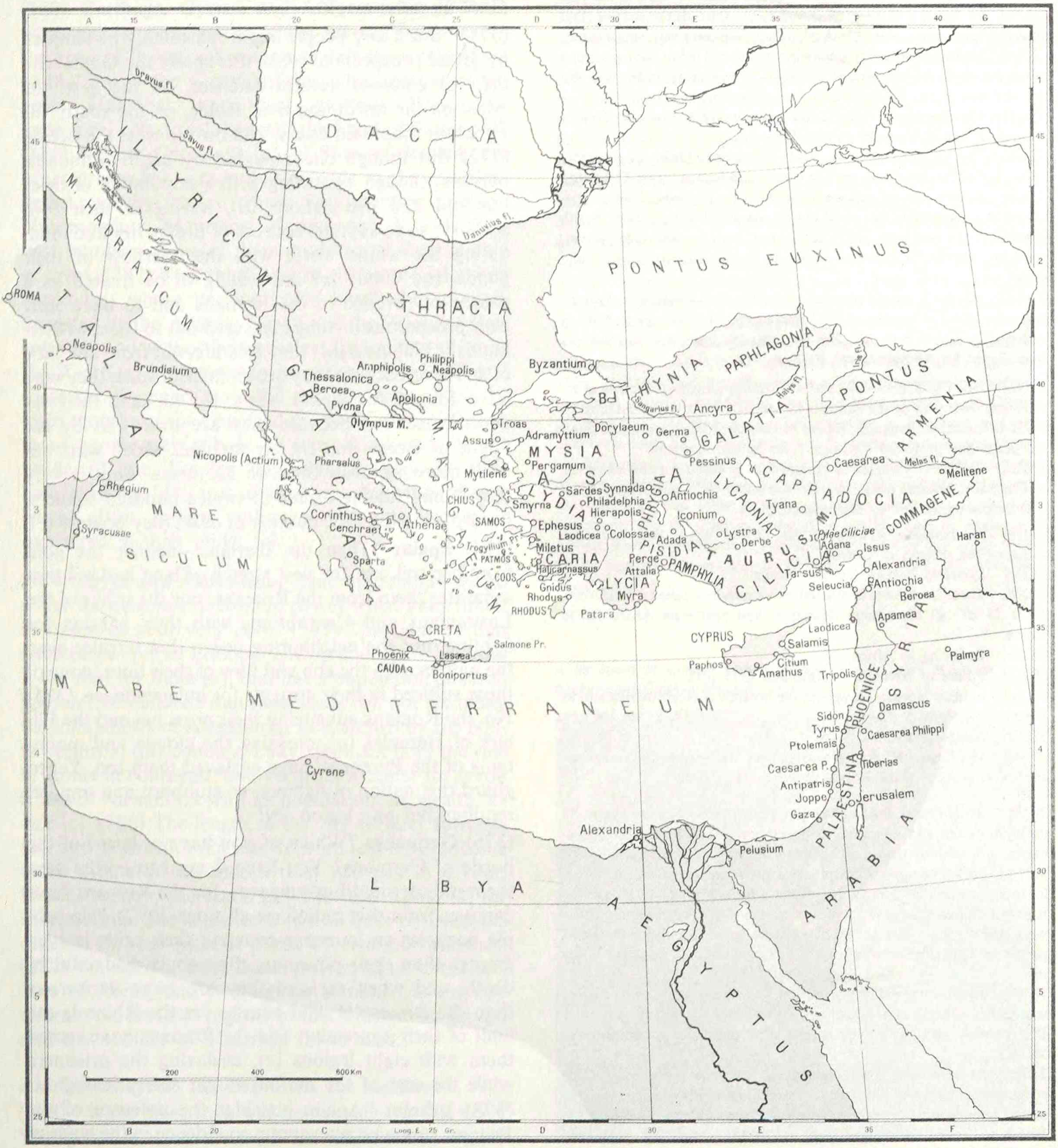
(365) "'Servitude is hard to bear,' you will tell me. How much harder for Greeks who surpass every nation under the sun in nobility and fill such a vast domain, and yet bow before the six rods of a Roman magistrate [a]! And before as many rods, so do the Macedonians [b], who have a better right than you to demand their liberty. (366) And what of the five hundred cities of Asia [c], do they not, without a garrison, bow before one governor and the consular fasces [d]? Need I mention the Heniochi [e], the Colchians [e], the Taurian race [e], the peoples near the Bosporus, the nations bordering on the Euxine [f] and Lake Maeotis [g]? (367) These people who at one time recognized not even a native ruler, are now submitting to three thousand soldiers, while forty

River harbor in the Danubian provinces (see 367 ff.). Loading of a boat, illustrating trade of the Roman Empire



warships now maintain the peace on that hitherto unnavigable and savage sea [*h*]. (368) What just claims to liberty might be advanced by Bithynia, Cappadocia, Pamphylia, Lycia and Cilicia [*a*], yet they pay their tribute without constraint of arms. Then there are the Thracians [*b*], spread over a country five days' march in width and seven in length, a country more rugged and far stronger than your own, a country, the rigor of whose icy climate is enough to repel the invader: do they not obey the orders of two

Eastern part of the Roman Empire, stretching from the Adriatic shores of southern Italy to Illyria, Thrace (bordering on the Euxine or Black Sea and Lake Maeotis (Azov). East of Greece lay the various kingdoms of Asia Minor, from Mysia to Armenia and Commagene. The eastern Mediterranean lands incorporated Syria, Phoenicia and Judaea (Palestine) as well as the caravan routes to Arabia and inner Asia. Egypt and Libya (Cyrene) formed part of northeastern Africa.



thousand Roman guards? (369) Their neighbors, the Illyrians [*c*] who inhabit the region extending from Dalmatia to the Ister, need only two legions [*c*] to keep them in check; and in fact the Illyrians themselves unite with them to repel the raids of the Dacians. (370) The Dalmatians again, who have so often tried to shake off the yoke to gain their liberty and have always been driven by defeat to rally their forces for a fresh revolt, do they not now live peacefully under one single Roman Legion [*d*]?

Gaul as an example

(371) "But if any people might reasonably be tempted by grand prospects to rebel, it is surely the Gauls with their magnificent natural defenses, on the east, the Alps, on the north, the river Rhine, on the south, the Pyrenees mountain chain, and on the west the ocean. (372) But though encompassed by such formidable barriers, though swarming with a population of three hundred and five nations [*a*], having in their own country, so to say, the sources of prosperity and inundating the whole world with the overflow of their goods, the Gauls [*a*] are willing to be treated as a source of revenue to the Romans and to have their own prosperous fortune measured out to them at their hands! (373) And this they tolerate, not from any lack of spirit, or because they are an inferior race, they who have fought for eighty years [*b*] to save their independence, but because they are overawed by the might of Rome and by her fortune, which wins her even more victories than do her arms. That is why they submit to the orders of twelve hundred soldiers, hardly more than the number of cities they possess [*c*].

(374) **Spain:** "Then the Iberians—neither the gold from her soil, nor the vast stretch of land and sea that separates them from the Romans, nor the tribes of the Lusitanians and Cantabrians with their passion for fighting, nor the neighboring ocean that terrifies even the natives with the ebb and flow of their tides, none of these sufficed in their struggle for independence. (375) No, the Romans advancing their arms beyond the Pillars of Hercules [*a*], crossing the clouds and mountains of the Pyrenees, have enslaved them too. Yet to guard this nation of fighters, so stubborn and remote, requires but one legion [*b*]!

(376) **Germany:** "Which of you has not heard of the horde of Germans? You have, I am sure, often seen their stalwart and burly figures, for the Romans have captives from that nation on all sides. (377) This people occupies an immense country; their pride is even greater than their physique, their souls disdainful of death, and when enraged they are more dangerous than the fiercest of wild beasts; yet the Rhine is the limit of their aggression and the Romans have tamed them with eight legions [*c*], enslaving the prisoners while the rest of the nation sought safety in flight.

(378) **Britain:** "Again, consider the defenses of the Britons, you who place your confidence in the walls of

369[*c*] *Illyrians* In southern Yugoslavia.

370[*d*] Probably the XI Claudia legion.

372[*a*] *The Gauls* According to the historian Appian, writing on the Celts, there were 400 "nations". The nations referred to are a "canton" or subdivision of the main province. According to Agrippa's description, the Gauls had all the means of production in their own land, and flooded almost the whole world with merchandise. This contradicts an erroneous impression that they were barbarians. As evidence of this, one may mention the imported luxuries, the numerous foreigners who brought them to Italy, the sumptuous architecture and art, as described in Pliny's *Natural History* XXIV, 45. This included a colossal statue of Mercury which was cast in bronze on the order of the Arveni tribe, in Gaul, during Nero's reign, and which cost a fortune. In addition, there was the highly developed local handicraft and local trade of which we learn in the 12th vol. of the Roman *Corpus of Inscriptions,* thus demonstrating that Josephus' statements placed in Agrippa's mouth were no exaggerations.

373[*b*] M. Fulvius Flaccus' campaign in 125 BC led to the foundation of the *Provincia Narbonensis*. A period of 75 years elapsed between this and the end of Julius Caesar's famous campaign in Gaul.

373[*c*] *The number of cities* There were over 800 towns in Gaul.

375[*a*] *Pillas of Hercules* namely Gibraltar.

375[*b*] The VI Victrix Legion, which proclaimed Galba as emperor.

377[*c*] Four of the legions were in Upper, and four in Lower Germany.

378[*a*] *Britain* was an important source of tin and lead. Though possessed of some wealth, this could not be compared to the greater wealth of Gaul. It exported corn, cattle, gold, silver, iron, tin, lead, hides, slaves, good hounds, and it imported wine, oil, bronze utensils, pottery, and glassware.

379[*a*] *Parthia's pacific attitude to Rome* One instance is Tacitus' statement that the brother of the Parthian king did homage to Nero in AD 63 (Tacitus, *Annals* XV, 29). Nevertheless, Nero sent detachments from Egypt for the subsequent Parthian War.

380[*b*] *Hand of Scipio—The Punic Carthage* (northeast Tunisia of today) was destroyed by the Romans in 146 BC, but it still maintained its Punic (Phoenician) language, similar to Hebrew. Rome maintained internal peace and protected Carthage from foreign invasion.

381[*a*] *Cyrene* (Cyrenaica or present Libya) which Antony had given to Cleopatra, became a Roman province under Octavian (Augustus). It was deeply permeated by Hellenistic culture.

381[*b*] *Marmaridae,* a tribe of the Libyan desert that had once menaced the security of Cyrene.

381[*c*] *Syrtes* in Fezzan, southern Libya.

381[*d*] These lands were converted into a province called *Africa Nova*. After 33 BC all Mauritania (Numidia) and northwest Africa fell to Rome.

382[*a*] Referring to Africa.

382[*b*] *Pillars of Hercules* — Gibraltar (375 [*b*]).

382[*c*] In other words, throughout the breadth of North Africa and its southern interior.

383[*d*] Varied taxation.

383[*e*] The Legion III Augusta which was stationed in the western or senatorial portion of the Roman province of Africa.

385[*a*] *Arabia Felix,* the southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula (today's Yemen and adjacent territories) was the Eldorado to the ancients, a flourishing land in contrast to the surrounding wastelands. It also prospered because of its precious products, especially perfumes, including imports from India. It was not a Roman province, though the Romans tried to subdue it. Its port of export was Aden, and in its trade with western Asia and the Mediterranean countries the Nabataeans played an important role. It traded with India as well, as stated in the text.

385[*b*] *Egypt* numbered seven million inhabitants some years earlier, according to Diodorus Siculus, the Sicilian historian of the first century BC, probably an exaggerated figure. The population of Alexandria was 300,000.

385[*c*] *Its size—why was Alexandria "a center of revolt?"* This cosmopolitan city, one of the largest metropolises of antiquity, was also one of Jewry's most important centers in Hellenistic and Roman times. Jewish settlement there dated back to the 3rd century BC. Jews con-

Jerusalem; the ocean surrounds them, they inhabit an island as big as the part of the world we are inhabiting [*d*]; yet the Romans crossed the sea and enslaved them, and four legions now secure that vast island.

(379) **Parthia:** "But why say more, when even the Parthians themselves, that most warlike race of all, rulers of so many nations and provided with such vast forces, send hostages to the Romans, and in Italy may be seen humbly in servitude under the pretext of peace, the nobility of the east! [*a*].

(380) **Carthage, Cyrene and African tribes:** "Thus, when almost every nation under the sun bows before the arms of Rome, will you alone defy them regardless of the fate of the Carthaginians, who boasted of the great Hannibal, and their glorious Phoenician ancestors, only to fall beneath the hand of Scipio [*b*]? (381) Neither Cyrenians [*a*], of Spartan descent, nor Marmaridae [*b*], a race that extends to the waterless desert, nor Syrtes [*c*], whose very mention terrifies, Nasamonians, Maurians, Numidians [*d*] with their vast numbers, none of them could resist Roman skill at arms. (382) This third part of the whole inhabited world [*a*], whose nations could hardly be counted, bounded by the Atlantic Ocean and the Pillars of Hercules [*b*] and supporting countless Ethiopians as far as the Red Sea, is subdued in its entirety [*c*]; (383) and these people, apart from the regular crops which for eight months of the year feed the population of Rome, these people pay tribute of every kind and for the needs of the Empire ungrudgingly pay in their contributions [*d*]; and, unlike you, take no offense when given orders, although but one legion is quartered in their midst [*e*].

(384) **Egypt and Alexandria:** "But why should we go so far for evidence of Roman power when I can find it in Egypt at your very door! (385) This country that stretches as far as Ethiopia and Arabia Felix [*a*], that is the port for India [*a*], that has a population of seven million five hundred thousand souls [*b*], not including the inhabitants of Alexandria, as is shown by the poll-tax returns; this country, I say, does not hold the rule of Rome in contempt; and yet what a center for revolt it has in Alexandria with its population, its wealth, its size [*c*]. (386) The length of the city is thirty furlongs [*a*], and its breadth not less than ten [*a*]; it pays Rome more tribute in one month than you pay in a year; besides money, she sends grain to feed Rome [*b*] for four months. She is protected on all sides by trackless deserts, by seas without ports, by rivers or marshes. (387) Yet none of these assets proved equal to the fortune of Rome, and two legions stationed in the city restrain the furthest regions of this widespread Egypt, and the nobility of Macedon [*c*] as well.

Aid from beyond the Euphrates for the Jews?

(388) "What allies then will you expect for this war? Will you recruit them from the uninhabited wilds?

stituted, apparently, between half and two-thirds of the population. The community was autonomous, but its advantageous legal position gradually deteriorated under Roman rule. National and religious conflicts with pagan Alexandrians that were further complicated by economic competition, provided ample grounds for ancient anti-Semitism. The Jews aspired to legal rights while the pagans strongly objected. Against this background, serious riots broke out in AD 38 against the Jews (in the days of Agrippa, friend of Claudius). In AD 66 under the influence of the rebellion in Judaea against Florus, disturbances broke out among the Jews, but were suppressed with cruelty by the Roman governor, Tiberius Alexander, a renegade Jew (formerly a procurator in Judaea). Josephus declares that 50,000 Jews perished before order was restored.

386[*a*] It was 3½ miles long and 1 mile wide (5.7 × 1.6 kms).

386[*b*] *Feed Rome—Egyptian and North African exports to Italy:* According to Josephus' information (as placed in the mouth of Agrippa) the African export trade to Puteoli, the Italian port, was even greater than that from southern Spain. For instance, Egypt's yearly contribution to the grain supply of Rome lasted for four months, whereas that of the North African nationalities (from the Atlantic coast to Ethiopia) lasted for eight. In addition to grain and oil, there were African dyes (especially purple) precious stones, pearls, ivory, asphalt, copper, figs, cumin, medicinal wares, and the like. Wine was not exported except for a little grape juice, which came into fashion through Emperor Tiberius.

387[*c*] The "nobility of Macedon" refers to Macedonian descendants of Alexander's army who settled and prospered in the city, matching the vast Jewish population and its influence.

388[*a*] *Adiabene* A feudal kingdom of Parthia in northeastern Mesopotamia and east of the river Tigris that gained its independence in the first century BC. Its queen, Helena, converted to Judaism (AD 30) with her sons King Monobazus II and Izates II. They built themselves palaces in the Lower City of Jerusalem (*War* V, 147), and north of the Third Wall they built a tomb complex of great magnificence to serve as the burial place for their family. The site is known today as the "Tombs of the Kings" (as illustrated). Their presence in Jerusalem and their charitable deeds had a great impact on the popular imagination, though we have scant information regarding the political implications and military potential of this sovereign kingdom in the current revolutionary movement, beyond some extravagant hopes raised among the local population and the Zealots about their possible help in waging war against Rome, and the fact that some members of the noble family fought beside the Jews (*War* II, 520, IV, 567, V, 262, 253, 474). (See Book V.)

A legionary in combat with a Gaul. A Gallic cabin is shown in the background (Louvre Museum, Paris)

390[*b*] *Can you fight without God's help?* Agrippa's argument, now resting on a religious theme, was aimed at the engrained Jewish belief that God's help is an absolute necessity in deciding the fate of the community and the individual. Therefore, he argued, the greatest threat posed against the people as a whole, and its individual members, would be the withdrawal of divine help.

392[*c*] The story is told in *War* I, 146 and *Antiquities* XIV, 63.

398[*a*] *The vast expansion of the Diaspora* The area of Jewish settlement outside Judaea had greatly extended through the cultural and political unification of the entire eastern Mediterranean area following the conquests of Alexander the Great and was further magnified considerably under the Roman Empire. Other contributing factors were the deportations and colonizing movements. The groups in Egypt were of major significance (385) and by the second century BC, they already extended westward into Libya and other parts of North Africa. North of Palestine, Jews were to be found in vast numbers in Syria and the kingdoms (and later Roman provinces) of Asia Minor. They penetrated into Greece and Italy, mainly in Rome. Subsequently, the Roman occupation of Syria–Palestine brought the Jews into the Latin orbit. Settlements extended during the Roman imperial period all over southern Europe, to Spain, France, the Rhineland, and all along the coast and hinterland of North Africa. The Jewish Diaspora in Europe for the most part spoke Greek and/or Latin. Finally, there remained long before and during this time strong Jewish settlements in Mesopotamia and Persia, even up to the Caucasus and central Asia.

405[*a*] *The Council* refers to the Jerusalem communal council.

405[*b*] The tribute for the villages in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

407[*c*] The tribute collected throughout the Roman province of Judaea, as opposed to that already collected by the Jerusalem council.

407[*d*] *Agrippa II's dominions* included the northeastern section of Herod's former kingdom: Auranitis (Hauran), Batanaea (Bashan), Trachonitis, Gaulanitis (Gaulan), Abel and Chalcis (southern Syria of today) and eastern Galilee, which he had received in AD 53 and 61.

408[*a*] Little is known of developments at Masada in the years following Herod's death, but it is improbable that its fortification, stores and palace referred to below in 434 [*d*] were left unoccupied. However, it is a known fact that at the beginning of the Great Revolt in AD 66, the stronghold was held by a Roman garrison. They were expelled by Zealots who held the stronghold until May 2, AD 73 when it was finally conquered by the Romans (*War* IV, 504; VII, 280–303; 304–406).

409[*b*] *Eleazar Ben Ananias,* as deputy or captain of the high priest, was in charge of supervising the ritual with absolute power in the Temple area.

409[*c*] He ordered the discontinuation of sacrifices to Rome and to the welfare of the emperor, and thus initiated the Great Revolt.

411[*a*] The non-political Pharisees had, by virtue of their whole ideology and past experience in communal affairs, equally good reasons to avoid an armed conflict. They had fought against Antiochus IV (167 BC) because he had endangered the very basis of their state and religious life (*War* I, 19, 31–38) and they were prepared to stand up to Caligula's idolatrous impositions (*War* II, 184–203), but to oppose the political force of Rome by another—a rebel force—would, the Pharisess felt, transfer the battle to the domain of armed forces in which the Romans were far superior.

411[*b*] The *Bronze Gate* stood at the top of 15 curved steps leading from the "Women's Court" to the exquisite Nicanor Gate, named after its Alexandrian donor. It had doors on each side which were made of beautifully wrought copper, and were plated with copper, not gold, as were other inner gates in the sanctified area. It is identical with the Beautiful Gate of Acts 3, 2.

413[*c*] *Votive offerings* by rich donors, often pilgrims from the Diaspora.

414[*d*] The sacrifices in honor of the emperor had been constituted originally by Augustus. They were offered twice daily (*War* II, 197) consisting of two lambs and a bull. According to Josephus, the expense was borne by the Jews and according to the Alexandrian Philo, by the emperor. As no gentile was allowed to approach the altar, this sacrifice did not incur any impurity, while, on the other hand, it perpetuated the symbol of respect for the foreign ruler at least as understood by Herod.

For in the inhabited world all are Romans—unless, maybe, you extend your hopes beyond the Euphrates and depend on obtaining aid from your kinsmen in Adiabene [*a*]. (389) But they will not, without good reason, get involved in such a war, and if they should contemplate such folly, the Parthian king would not permit it; for he is anxious to maintain the truce with the Romans, and would consider it a breach of the treaty if any of his tributaries takes the field against them.

Religion of no help without allies

(390) "So the only refuge left to you is divine assistance [*b*]. But even this is ranged on the Roman side, for without God's aid, so vast an empire could not have been built up. (391) Consider, too, how difficult it would be to preserve your religious rules from contamination, even if you were fighting opponents easy to overcome; and how if you will be forced to transgress the very principles on which you chiefly build your hopes of God's assistance, you will alienate Him from you. (392) If you observe your Sabbath customs and refuse on that day to take any action, you will easily be defeated [*c*], as were your ancestors by Pompey, who pressed the siege especially on the days when the besieged remained passive [*c*]. (393) But if in the war you transgress your ancestral law, I don't see what you have left to fight for, since your one desire is to preserve inviolate all your ancestral customs. (394) How could you invoke the Deity to your aid if you deliberately omit to pay Him the service that is due? All who embark on war rely on the support either of God or man; but when, as is probable, no assistance is forthcoming from either quarter, then those who go to war choose obvious defeat. (395) What prevents you then from killing with your own hands your wives and children, and from consigning this most beautiful fatherland to the flames? By such an act of madness you will at least spare yourselves the shame of defeat. (396) It is wise, my friends, it is wise, while the vessel is still in harbor to foresee the approaching storm and not to sail out into the midst of the hurricane to meet your doom. For those on whom unforeseen disaster falls are at least entitled to pity, but he who rushes to obvious destruction with eyes open earns contempt.

A call for compassion on race, city and Temple

(397) "Possibly some of you imagine that the war will be fought under special terms, and that when the Romans have won they will treat you with consideration; on the contrary, to make you an example to other nations, they will burn the holy city to the ground and exterminate your race. Even the survivors will find no place of refuge, since all the peoples of the earth either have or are afraid to have the Romans as their masters. (398) Moreover, the peril threatens not only us here, but also the Jews who live in foreign cities, for there is no people in the world which does

not contain a portion of our race [*a*]. (399) All these, if you go to war, will be massacred by your opponents, and through the folly of a few men every city will be drenched with Jewish blood. There would be an excuse for such a massacre, but, should it not take place, think what a crime it would be to take up arms against such humane opponents! (400) Take pity if not on your children and your wives, then at least on your mother city and its sacred precincts. Spare the sanctuary and preserve for yourselves the Temple with its sacred treasures. For the Romans will no longer keep their hands off when they have captured them, since they have only met with ingratitude for sparing them hitherto. (401) As for me, I call to witness your sanctuary and the holy angels of God and our common country, that I have not kept back anything that would contribute to your preservation; as for you, if you make the right decision, you will enjoy with me the blessings of peace, but if you are carried away by your passions, you will go without me, in tremendous peril."

6. Agrippa's advice to pay the tribute and restore the porticoes

(402) Having ended his speech, he burst into tears, so did his sister, and with his tears considerably dampened the fervor of his hearers. But they began to shout that they were not taking up arms against Rome, but against Florus, for all the harm he had done to them. (403) To this Agrippa replied: "But you have acted as if you were already at war with Rome; you have not paid your tribute to Caesar, and you have cut down the porticoes joining with Antonia. (404) If you wish to refute the charges of insurrection, re-establish the porticoes and pay the tax; for assuredly the fortress does not belong to Florus, and it is not Florus who will receive the money."

Chapter XVII

1. The people's rebuilding of the porticoes; Agrippa expelled

(405) Accepting this advice, the people went up to the Temple with the king and Bernice and began the reconstruction of the porticoes, while the magistrates and members of the Council [*a*] went to the various villages and collected the tribute [*b*]. The arrears due, amounting to forty talents, were quickly collected. (406) In this way Agrippa delayed for the moment the menace of war. However, subsequently he tried to induce the people to submit to the orders of Florus until Caesar sent a successor to replace him. Thereupon the people became furious and heaped abuse upon the king and formally proclaimed his banishment from the city; some of the insurgents even dared to throw stones at him. (407) The king, seeing that the passions of the revolutionaries could no longer be controlled, and angered by the insults he had received, sent the magistrates and principal citizens to Florus at Caesarea, in order that he might appoint some of them to collect the tribute in the countryside [*c*]; then he withdrew to his own dominions [*d*].

2. Capture of Masada (summer of AD 66); cessation of the sacrifices for Rome

(408) Meanwhile, some of the most ardent promoters of war banded together and made an assault on a stronghold called Masada [*a*]; and, having captured it by stealth, slew the Roman guards and put a garrison of their own in their place. (409) At the same time another incident occurred in the Temple: Eleazar, son of Ananias the high priest, and a very rash young man then holding the position of captain [*b*], persuaded those who officiated at the Temple to accept no gift or sacrifice from a foreigner. This action laid the foundation of the war with Rome; for they renounced in consequence the sacrifices offered for Rome and the emperor [*c*]. (410) The chief priests and the prominent citizens earnestly appealed to them not to abandon the customary offerings for their rulers, but the priests would not give in. Their numbers gave them great confidence, backed as they were by the stalwarts of the revolutionary party; but they pinned their faith above all on the authority of the captain, Eleazar.

3. Earnest objections of the leading Jewish citizens

(411) Thereupon the leading citizens assembled with the chief priests and most prominent Pharisees [*a*] to discuss the position of affairs now that they faced irreparable disaster. They decided to try an appeal to the revolutionaries and summoned the people before the Bronze Gate—the gate of the inner sanctuary facing eastward [*b*]. (412) They began by denouncing vehemently the recklessness of this revolt and pointed out that such a war would be total; then they proceeded to ridicule the absurdity of the pretext. Their ancestors, they said, had adorned the sanctuary mainly at the expense of other peoples and had always accepted the gifts of foreign nations; (413) and so far from debarring any man from offering sacrifice—for this would be sacrilege—they had set up the votive offerings [*c*] around the Temple which were still visible and had remained there for so long a time. (414) And here were these men provoking Roman arms and courting war with them by an alien innovation in their religion, and, besides endangering the city, laying it open to the charge of impiety, if Jews henceforth were to be the only people to allow no foreigner the right to sacrifice or worship [*d*]. (415) Should such a law be introduced to debar a single individual, they would be indignant at such an inhumane decree; but they made light of putting the Romans and Caesar outside the pale. (416) There was a danger, however, that once they rejected the sacrifices offered for the Romans, they might not be allowed to sacrifice even for

themselves, and that their city would be placed outside the pale of the empire [*e*] unless they quickly recovered their common sense, restored the sacrifices, and wiped out the affront before it was reported to those they had insulted.

4. Agrippa's provision of reinforcement to the leading citizens

(417) While they pleaded thus, they brought forth priests with expert knowledge on the traditions, who testified that all their ancestors had accepted offerings from aliens. But none of the revolutionaries would listen and not even the Temple ministers came forward to their support and thus they were instrumental in bringing about war. (418) So, seeing that they could not suppress the insurrection and that the vengeance of Rome would fall on them first, the leading citizens took steps to establish their own innocence. They sent two delegations, one to Florus, headed by Simon, son of Ananias, the other to Agrippa which included such eminent persons as Saul, Antipas and Costobar [*a*], all members of the royal family. (419) They begged them to come with troops to the city and suppress the insurrection before it got beyond control. (420) To Florus, the news was splendid, and in his eagerness to kindle the war, he gave the emissaries no reply. (421) But Agrippa, equally concerned for the rebels and for the nation against which they were rising in arms, anxious that the Romans should not lose the Jews, nor the Jews their Temple and mother city, and aware that he himself would gain nothing by troubles, dispatched to the aid of these citizens two thousand horses from Auranitis, Batanaea and Trachonitis under Darius the cavalry commander, and Philip [*b*], son of Jacimus, as general.

5. The struggle between the insurgents and the pro-Romans

(422) Thus encouraged by the reinforcements, the leading citizens, the chief priests and all the peace-loving sections of the people occupied the Upper City [*a*]; (423) the Lower City with the Temple was in the hands of the insurgents [*b*]. There followed a steady exchange of stones from hand and sling, a continuous stream of missiles from both quarters. Sometimes they burst forth in company strength engaging in hand-to-hand combat, the insurgents showing the greater courage, the king's troops the greater skill. (424) The objective of the latter was to capture the Temple and to expel those who were contaminating the sanctuary; Eleazar and the insurgents aimed to gain the Upper City in addition to what they held already. The result was seven days' mutual slaughter, neither side having dislodged from the portion of the town it occupied.

6. The rebels reinforced by the Sicarii

(425) The eighth day was the Feast of Wood-carrying [*c*], on which it was the custom for all to bring wood for the altar, so that there should never be a lack of

416[*e*] Shut out of the empire.

418[*a*] Saul and Costobar were brothers who made a timely exit from Jerusalem after the defeat of Cestius (*War* II, 556). Antipas, who did not leave, was slain by the Zealots (*War* IV, 138–142).

421[*b*] Details about the antecedents of Philip are given in Josephus' autobiographical *Life* (46–62). Jacimus, his father, had held a high position under the former Agrippa, and his grandfather, Zamaris, had been appointed governor of a colony of Babylonian Jews who had been settled in Batanaea (Bashan; *Antiq.* XVII, 23–29).

422[*a*] *The Upper City* was built on the flanks and top of the Western Hill of Mt. Zion and the Lower City stretched east and south of it, and circumscribed the area of the Temple Mount and the approaches thereto. (See map of Jerusalem).

423[*b*] The term "insurgents" used by Josephus refers to the Zealots (*War* II, 118 above) who instigated the Great Revolt in AD May 66. The Sicarii were Zealot activists and terrorists (*War* II, 433 [*a*]).

425[*c*] The obligations underlying the wood ceremonial were decreed since ancient times (Leviticus 6, 1–6). The *Mishna Ta'anit* 4:5 states that the wood was carried by respective families on nine separate days of the year; the principal day was the 15th of Ab (approx. August). There seems to be a discrepancy between this and 430 below which places the ceremony on the preceding day, the 14th of Ab.

426[*d*] *The high priest's house* was situated in the Upper City where it enjoyed a wide panorama and cool breezes; it was apparently close to the Hasmonean Palace occupied by Agrippa and Bernice. Neither the Palace nor the high priest's house have been discovered. But N. Avigad's excavations have uncovered the burnt house of another priest, 55 m. square, which contained an entrance room, four rooms, small kitchen and bath. Among the finds was a stone weight bearing the Aramaic inscription *"(Of) Bar Kathros"*; the Talmud mentions Kathros as the name of one of the four high priestly families who abused their status in granting their kin positions in the Temple, and exploiting the people (*Pesachim* 57 [*a*]). In the debris above a floor ascribed to that time, the excavators found a fragment of a limestone tablet depicting double cornucopiae with pomegranates, and among the fragments of a fresco, the depiction of a seven-branched Candelabrum *(Menorah)*. (See illus. in Book VI).

427[*a*] *The revolutionary implications* The Archives offices were near the Bouleutérion or Council House in the Lower City, adjoining the Tyropoeon road. From its inception, the uprising had revolutionary implications. The city archives contained records of indebtedness and had become, in the public eye, symbols of economic exploitation. Thus the uprising started as a civil war; its prospective victims, the high priest and leading citizens, understandubly enough, refused at that stage to make common cause with their assailants. While Eleazar ben Ananias (409 [*b*]) had ordered the cessation of the daily sacrifices in honor of the emperor— the main signal of the revolt—the infuriated populace burnt the public archives.

428[*d*] *The underground sewers* The conduit in question was the rain-sewer cut out of rock which ran under the street situated over the Tyropoeon valley. The excavations carried out by B. Mazar along the Western Wall of the Temple Mount have shown that this sewer lies 6 m. below the street. It served to gather the rainwater flowing to it from other channels. The sewer was dry in the summer and thus could serve as a hiding place. (See Book V).

429[*c*] Herod's Palace situated at the top of Mount Zion (the Western Hill) is described in *War* V, 176.

430[*a*] *Lous* (in the Macedonian calendar) is equivalent to Ab in the Hebrew calendar, approximating to August. From then on, the *Antonia* served as a stronghold in the defenses of Jerusalem until the Romans destroyed it (330, 422).

431[*b*] The western walls of Jerusalem comprised towers which jutted out and possessed breastworks and crenellations from which missiles were shot down through portholes.

433[*c*] See *War* II, 118 for the background of early revolts in Galilee led by Judas the Galilean, father of Menahem.

433[*c*] *The Sicarii in the framework of the Revolt* Even though Josephus appears to embody them in his negative attitude to all forms of zealotry that he holds responsible for the eventual destruction of Jerusalem, he never credits them with any ideological background to

fuel for the fire which is always kept burning. Those in the Temple excluded their opponents from this ceremony, but along with some people who were unarmed, many of the Sicarii—so they called the brigands who took their name from a dagger carried in their bosom—forced their way in; these they enlisted in their ranks and pressed their attacks more confidently. (426) The king's troops, now outmatched in numbers and courage, were forced to evacuate the Upper City. Their adversaries rushed in and set fire to the house of Ananias the high priest [*d*] and to the palaces of Agrippa and Bernice. (427) They then carried their combustibles to the public archives [*a*], eager to destroy the money-lenders' bonds so as to prevent the recovery of debts, in order to secure the support of an army of debtors and enable the poor to rise with impunity against the rich. The keepers of the record office fled and the building was set on fire. (428) When the vital center of the city had gone up in flames, the insurgents went after their foes; thereupon some of the leading citizens and chief priests hid themselves in the underground sewers [*b*], (429) while others fled with the king's troops to the palace [*c*] situated higher up and shut the gates instantly; among these were Ananias the high priest, his brother Hezekiah, and those who had formed the deputation to Agrippa. Satisfied with their victory and incendiary exploits, the insurgents paused for that day.

7. Capture of the Antonia and siege of the royal palace

(430) The next day, the fifteenth of the month Lous [*a*], they attacked the Antonia, and after a two-day siege captured and killed the garrison, and set fire to the fortress [*a*]. (431) They then moved to the palace where the king's men had taken refuge, and splitting up into four groups assaulted the walls [*b*]. None of the blockaded defenders dared attempt a sortie because of the great number of attackers; but posting themselves upon the breastworks and towers they pelted missiles upon all who approached, so that many of the brigands fell at the foot of the walls. (432) The struggle continued day and night, the insurgents hoping to starve out the defenders, the defenders to wear down the besiegers by fatigue.

8. Menahem's assumption of command

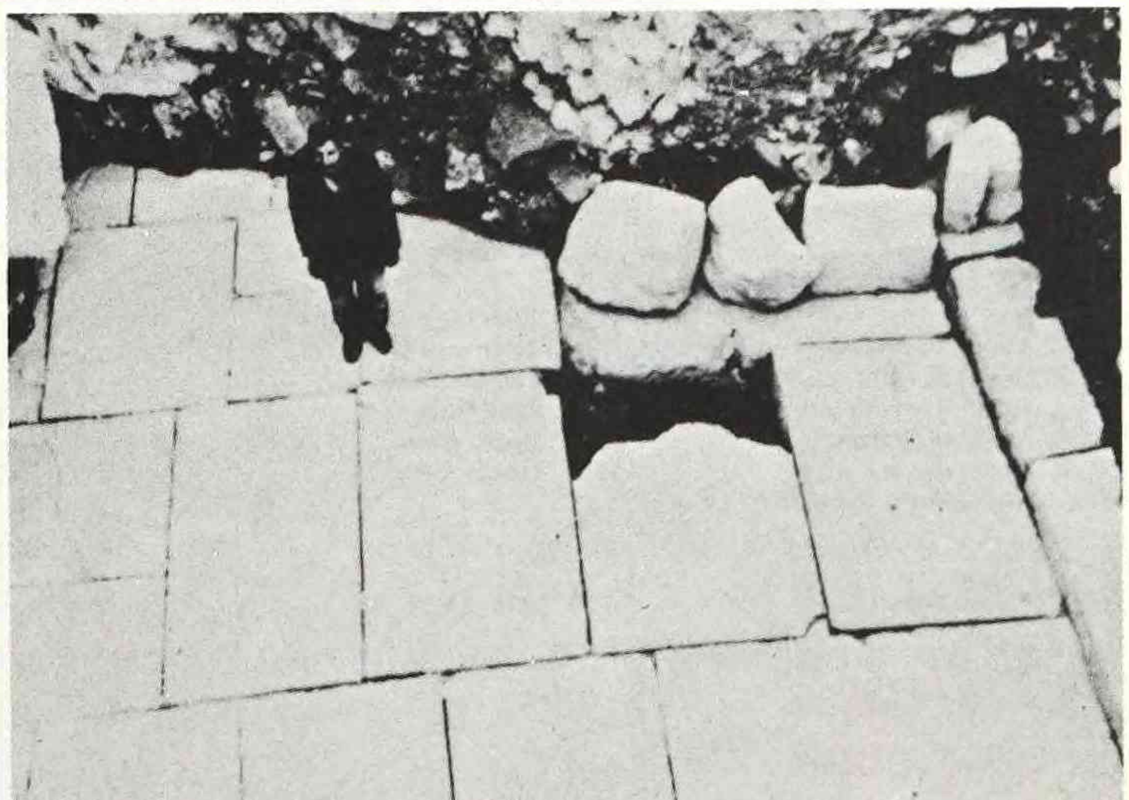
(433) At this moment a certain Menahem, son of Judas the Galilean—that redoubtable teacher [*c*] who in former days, in the time of Quirinius, had reproached the Jews for submitting to the Romans after having served God—(434) he now took his close friends with him to Masada [*d*] where he broke open the king's armory [*e*] and armed his fellow-townsmen and other brigands; then with these as body-guards, he returned like a king to Jerusalem, became the leader of the revolution, and took charge of the siege of the palace. (435) But the besiegers had no engines,

justify their deeds and policies. Nevertheless, he does provide the historian with other clues to their true nature. We learn that with the death of Menahem, they lost their main leader on whom were focused the eschatological hopes of the great Galilean movement stemming from Judas the Galilean (*War* II, 118, 433). It may be, according to M. Stern that "this supposition is supported in some way by the late tradition embodied in the Babylonian Talmud which includes the names of Menahem and Hezekiah (*War* II, 56) in the eschatological picture of future redemption" (*Sanhedrin* 99 [*a*]). Moreover, Josephus calls him a "sage" and even at his first appearance, describes him as the redoubtable "doctor" and similarly when he was stoned by the populace; "but the movement left eschatological hopes in its aftermath." (*War* II, 445; M. Stern, *The World History of the Jewish People*, pp. 273–277, 1977). Hence, the Sicarii ceased to exist as a decisive influence on the fortunes of the war in Jerusalem and on the central conduct of the rebellion in Judaea, though they did leave a clear trace of their existence (*War* VII, 253–262). Moreover, it can be assumed, according to M. Stern that "they were no longer a definite body with an independent military formation at the time of the siege of Jerusalem and must be sought in the framework of other groupings. Particularly reasonable is the assumption that the Sicarii filled the ranks of the troops of Simeon bar Giora (*War* IV, 504; V, 248–250; V, 309 [*a*])... They preferred to flock to him rather than the other leaders because their own extreme social conceptions resembled those current in the camp of Simeon; their common social ideas were thus able to build a bridge between the remains of the Sicarii and Simeon's circle." (p. 277). The *Avot de Rabbi Nathan* refers to them once as Zealots and the other as Sicarii "when they arose and burnt all the granaries." M. Stern draws also an interesting comparison between the figures of Menahem and the Zealot leader Simeon bar Giora, noting that Menahem's status was largely a consequence of his family's prestige (the family of Judas the Galilean), whereas the prestige and power of Simeon—who was the son of proselytes from Geres in Samaria—is due to his leadership of the lower classes throughout the land and his outstanding revolutionary career described below (*War*, 556–564; 573–584). In Jewish sources, the difference between the two personalities (as averred by Josephus) is the appellation given to the leaders of the Sicarii, namely "Sages"—a term in no way suited to a description of Simeon's character (see *War* II, 118 f.g. on the Zealots).

434[*d*] *Masada* A natural high rock fortress overlooking the western barren shores of the Dead Sea. The earliest fortress was built there (according to *War* VII, 285) by the Maccabean high priest and leader Jonathan (brother of Judah the Maccabee), or more likely, by Alexander Jannaeus (*War* I, 86–98) whose Hebrew name was also Jonathan. It is referred to as a stronghold when it was taken by Malichus, the antagonist of Antipater, Herod's father (*War* I, 237). Later Herod used Masada as a safe retreat for his family in 40 BC before leaving from Rome (*War* I, 238; 263–266). After his return and crowning he built a completely new fortress there, the site of a magnificent winter retreat complete with the palace, baths, storehouses, administrative buildings, described in detail in *War* VII, 280–300, with pertinent details of Y. Yadin's excavations of this historic site, as illustrated.

434[*e*] The king's armory was the only one left by Herod and the Roman garrison. Menahem distributed weapons to his fellow townsmen and to other insurgent Zealots.

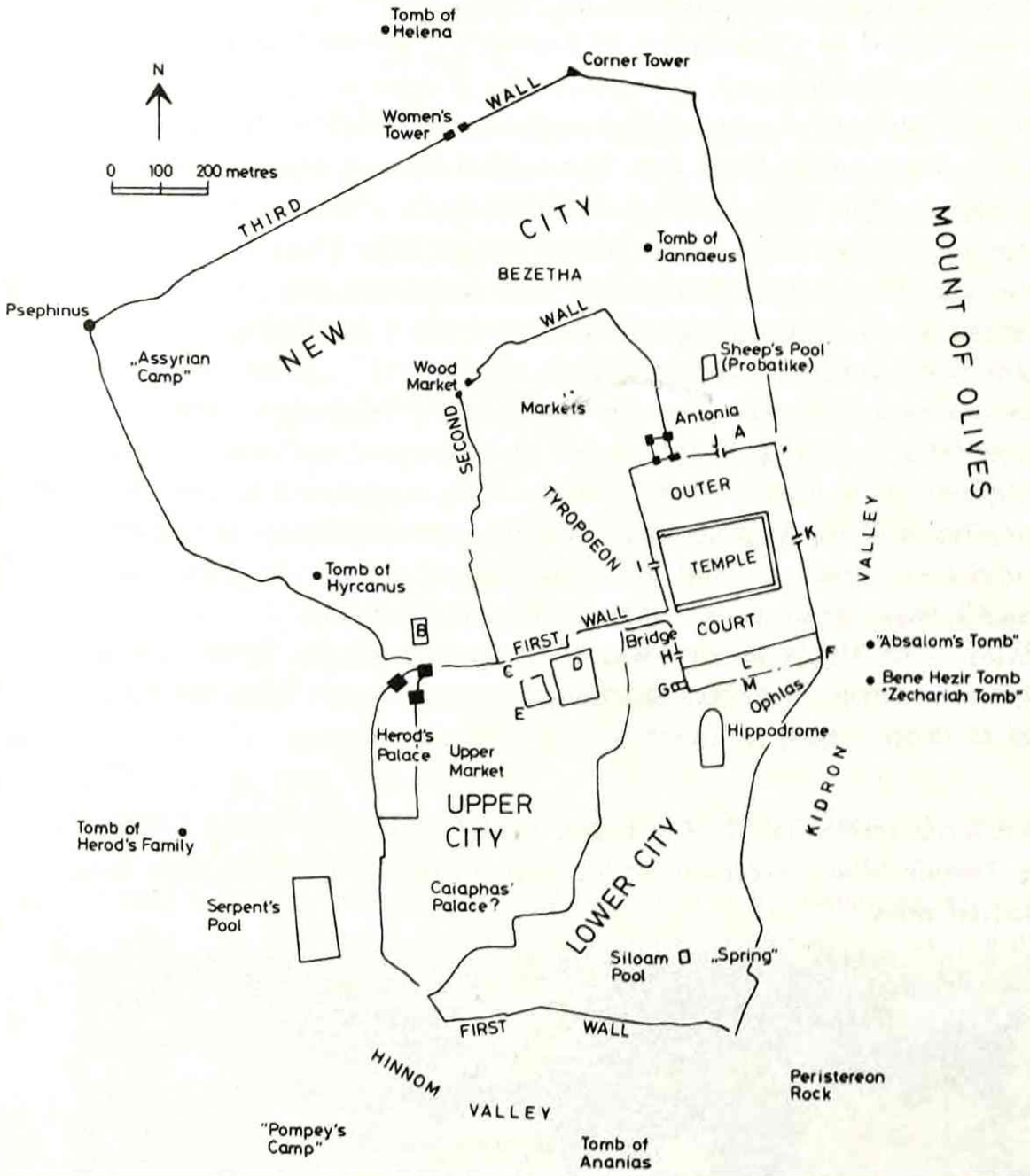
Uncovered section of the Tyropoeon road (see 428[d]) which bordered the Temple Mount precincts on the west. Various public buildings were situated there



435[*f*] The people propped up the towers and transferred their weight on to wooden props which they subsequently set on fire.

436[*g*] *Another wall...:* In excavations conducted by M. Broshi along the Western Wall of the Old City (namely along the First Wall) between the Citadel towers and the southwest corner of the Old City (as illustrated), it may be observed that for a length of about 400 feet south of the Citadel, one can easily distinguish that the Turkish wall was *built over remains of the Herodian and Hasmonean wall* (which are visible at the lower levels). The latter have characteristic courses of ashlar blocks with margins and bosses, sometimes alternating headers and stretchers. This wall, also known on its inner sill from soundings in the Armenian garden (situated over the edge of Herod's palace grounds) was some 5 m. thick, namely twice as thick as the later Turkish wall. Incorporated into the wall was an *earlier structure,* possibly a tower, which can be dated to one of the first Hasmonean kings. In front of the Hasmonean wall—and attached to it—stood yet *another wall* some 2.5 m. thick. It was built partly of Hasmonean-style blocks and partly of large roughly chipped stones. This was not a wall proper, but some kind of fore-wall, a phenomenon widespread in the Hellenistic and Roman period (also known as *protochisma,* or in Latin *ager*). Josephus mentions the existence of a wall in front of the Antonia. We seem to encounter in pars. 435–436 another *protochisma*. In the stretch of the Western Wall referred to above, the thickness of the wall was some feet, and this may be accounted for as a wall protecting the elevated palace foundations, namely to withstand the massive earth substructure on which the palace was built (*War* V, 177–181).

"Another wall" would be one abutting on the outer wall of Herod's palace (left). The term Royal Stoa is synonymous with the Royal Portico. The three towers marked by black squares were Phasael, Hippicus and Mariamme shown on the left side of the map of Jerusalem above Herod's palace. This was also the governor's residence in Jerusalem, as it was in the days of Jesus, and the site of the Praetorium



A = Pool
B = Amygdalon Pool
C = Gennath Gate
D = Hasmonaen Palace (Acra)
E = Ananias' Palace
F = Ophel Corner
G = 'Robinson's Arch'
H = 'Barclay's Gate'
I = 'Warren's Gate'
J = Taddai Gate
K = Susa Gate
L = Royal Stoa
M = Hulda Gates

and to undermine the walls under the enemy's eyes was impossible while they were pelted from above; accordingly, they started digging a mine at a distance, as far as one of the towers which they shored up [*f*], and then, after setting the supports on fire, they withdrew. (436) When the props were burnt through, the tower suddenly collapsed, only to reveal another wall [*g*] constructed further back; for the defenders, foreseeing their stratagem—possibly warned by the shaking of the tower while it was undermined—had provided themselves with a second rampart.

The palace evacuated

(437) This unexpected sight dismayed the assailants, who believed that victory was theirs already. However, the garrison sent to Menahem and the leaders of the insurrection a request for permission to come out under an armistice. This was granted, but only to the king's troops and natives, who then came out. (438) Left unsupported, the Romans lost heart; they could not push their way through such a large force, and they were ashamed to sue for terms; besides, these terms might not even be kept if they were granted. (439) Accordingly, they evacuated their camp [*a*] as indefensible and retired to the King's Towers, Hippicus, Phasael and Mariamme [*b*]. (440) Menahem's followers, charging into the position just deserted, killed all who had not been quick enough to escape, looted the baggage and set fire to the camp. This happened on the sixth of the month Gorpiaeus [*c*].

9. Murder of Menahem

(441) On the next day the high priest Ananias was caught near the canal [*a*] in the palace grounds, where he was hiding, and was killed by the brigands along with his brother Eezekiah; also the insurgents surrounded the towers and kept strict guard so that no soldier should escape. (442) But Menahem, blown with pride and ruthlessness by the reduction of the strongholds and by the murder of the high priest Ananias, and believing himself without rival in the conduct of affairs, became unbearably tyrannical. (443) Eleazar [*b*] and his men now rose against him; they agreed between themselves that they ought not revolt from Rome for love of liberty and then hand over their liberty to a Jewish executioner who, even if not violent, was certainly inferior to themselves; and if they must have a leader, anyone would be preferable to Menahem! So they formed their plans and attacked him in the Temple (444) when he entered with a brilliant display of splendor to worship, decked with kingly robes and followed by a train of armed Zealots. (445) When Eleazar and his men rushed at him, the rest of the people seized stones and began to pelt the arrogant teacher in the hope that his overthrow would put an end to the whole revolt; (446) Menahem and

his men held out for awhile but when they saw the whole populace rushing towards them they fled in every possible direction. Those who were caught were massacred, and a hunt was made for those in hiding. (447) A few succeeded in escaping in stealth to Masada, among them Eleazar, son of Jairus, and a relative of Menahem who later became the despot of Masada [*b*]. (448) Menahem himself took flight to the so-called Ophel [*c*] and concealed himself there ignominiously. He was caught, dragged into the open, and put to death by prolonged torture. His lieutenant, along with Absalom, his most eminent backer in his tyranny, suffered a similar fate.

10. Capitulation and massacre of the Roman garrison

(449) The people, as I said [*a*], cooperated in the hope of putting an end to the insurrection altogether; but the conspirators in killing Menahem were in no hurry to end hostilities, but only to have a free hand in the campaign [*b*]. (450) In fact, although the people urgently requested the soldiers to abandon the siege, they pressed it even more vigorously, until Metilius, the commander of the Roman garrison and his men, unable to hold out, sent officers to Eleazar to ask only that their lives should be guaranteed under the terms of capitulation and offering to surrender their arms and all their possessions. (451) The besiegers jumped at this entreaty and sent to them Gorion, the son of Nicomedes, Ananias, the son of Zaddok, and Judas, the son of Jonathan, to promise them safety on oath. (452) That done, Metilius marched his soldiers down. As long as they were armed, the insurgents did not harm them and gave no sign of treachery; but when, in accordance with the agreement, they had all laid down their shields and swords, and without a suspicion in their minds, were marching away, (453) Eleazar and his men rushed at them, surrounded them and massacred them; the Romans neither resisted nor begged for mercy, but merely appealed with loud cries to "the covenant" and "the oaths." (454) Thus were they all brutally slaughtered except Metilius, who begged for mercy by promising to become a Jew and even to be circumcized so as to save his life. This setback meant little to the Romans, whose immense numbers were not affected by such a slight loss; but to the Jews it seemed like the prelude to their destruction. They saw that an irremediable excuse for war had been given; and that the city was polluted by such a stain of guilt that they must expect a visitation from heaven, if not the vengeance of Rome; (455) they gave themselves up to public mourning; the whole city was a scene of dejection, and among the moderate citizens there was not one who was not terrified at the thought that he would have to pay for the crimes of the insurgents. (456) For to add to its heinousness, the massacre was carried out on a Sabbath [*a*] a day on which on religious scruples Jews abstain even from the most innocent deeds.

439[*a*] The stone-built camp was situated near the towers built by Herod north of the Palace and it bordered the Western Wall of the city (see map).

439[*c*] *The Three Towers* (described in *War* V, 161–176) were Phasael, Hippicus, Mariamme and they formed a compact triangular stronghold as the main defenses of the city's Western Wall; they were situated to the north of Herod's Palace. The obscure course of military events at the beginning of the First Revolt in July–August AD 66 may be summarized as follows: After the cavalry forces brought by Agrippa II (421) had abandoned the Herodian palace defenses, the remaining Roman troops that had been repulsed from the Lower City took up positions in the three towers and continued to defend themselves there. The towers were not built in a line along the Western city wall but in a triangle which was far easier to defend. A description of the interesting discoveries in this strategic area (the Citadel) is given under *War* V, 161–176. The strongholds of Jerusalem were captured under the leadership of the Zealots, and were in their hands by the month of Ab (August) AD 66.

440[*c*] *Gorpiaeus* is equivalent to the Hebrew month of Ellul (approximately the end of August).

441[*a*] *The Canal,* probably a tunnel or an aqueduct hidden underground. It would not be one of the irrigation canals around the Palace described in *War* V, 181, but possibly an underground section forming the end of the *Upper Aqueduct* that brought water from the Solomon Pools near Hebron. "In the past, stone segments of this have been found bearing inscriptions of commanders of the Tenth Legion; the Upper Aqueduct was built to supply water to the legion's camp in the area of today's Citadel.... A hewn tunnel of this Upper Aqueduct was discovered (in recent explorations) to the west of the Yemin Moshe quarter of Jerusalem (which faces the Citadel of the west), at a slightly higher level than the Citadel; this apparently carried water to the largest cistern in Jerusalem—*Hezekiah's Pool,* lying very close to the Citadel." (B. Mazar: *Aqueducts of Jerusalem; Jerusalem Revealed,* p. 84.)

443[*b*]–447[*b*] *The feud raging between the Zealot factions* The diffused situation outlined sketchily by Josephus may be summed up as follows: The Zealot, Menahem, was the last offspring of Judas the Galilean (*War* II, 118, 433). Forty years later, his sons Jacob and Simon were crucified by the Roman procurator Tiberius Alexander (*Antiq.* XX, 102). Menahem, who had captured Masada and attempted, at the beginning of the Great Revolt, to assert his superior authority among the other rebel Zealots when he entered the Temple in royal apparel, died in a feud which raged at the time (AD 66) between the various revolutionary factions in Jerusalem (*War* II, 433–448). One of those who had escaped the massacre was yet another descendant of Judas the Galilean. This was a nephew of Menahem, *Eleazar,* the son of Jairus (*Ben-Yair* in Hebrew) whom we shall meet below (*War* II, 564–565), and in the tragic narrative of Masada's last stand *War* VII, 252, 275, 320–406). He is the same leader whose name figures on a potsherd found in the ruins of Masada's ultimate drama described by Y. Yadin (*Masada,* p. 201).

448[*c*] *The Ophel* to which Menahem fled consisted of the terraced slopes in the Lower City, south of the Temple. It was a densely populated section of ancient Jerusalem. Menahem found refuge among the partisans recruited from the lower classes.

449[*a*] Compare 445.

449[*b*] *The campaign* refers to the one against the Romans along lines laid down by the other Zealot leaders beside Menahem.

456[*a*] Possibly the 17th of Ellul identified by many with the massacre mentioned in *Megillath Ta'anith* VI [*b*], saying: "on the 17th day of Ellul the Romans evacuated Judah and Jerusalem," as in 437, i.e. where no terms of surrender were made, while Josephus dates the incident to the 6th day of the month. Hence it is possible that the Romans tarried for eleven more days between the 6th and 17th.

457[*b*] *Caesarea,* after Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome and perhaps Antioch, may have contained the largest Jewish urban population in the Roman Empire of the first century AD. However, the city was overwhelmingly Greek. 20,000 Jews were massacred in AD 66. The remaining ones were imprisoned and sent to hard labor (*War* II, 269 and 291). Some had fled during the years prior to the outbreak of war. The revolt, as noted, was triggered by the malice of the gentile Caesareans in AD 66 and by the brutality of Florus, who aided the enemies of the Jews, and apparently incited them to commit criminal acts.

458[*ab*] *The Jewish reprisals,* as enumerated, began in southern Transjordan: in Philadelphia (present-day Amman), Heshbon, Gerasa, Pella (*War* I, 104, 134, 156) all situated in the Hellenistic ten-city *Decapolis* and in Scythopolis (Bethshean; details and repercussions in 466–469). Then they proceeded northwards, around Galilee, and generally followed the coastline Hellenistic cities from north to south, where they razed Gaza, Anthedon, and numerous villages peopled by Gentiles (see map). It is possible that other separate Jewish raiding parties started their attacks directly from the inland centers of Peraea, Galilee and Judaea. However, according to modern scholarship, Josephus seems to have greatly exaggerated the extent of the damage caused by the Jews in their guerrilla warfare. None of these cities, as a result of such attacks, was burned or razed. We can find evidence of this in pars. 477–480 where the cities are mentioned again, and are quite able to account for themselves in their fights against the Jews. Gaza was certainly not damaged seriously, as a few years later, in AD 75, coins were struck there by the communal council. Nor was Ascalon destroyed since the Jews attacked it again as related in *War* III, 9, 12, 23. Consequently, these Jewish reprisals were only the forerunner of the future serious uprising of the Jewish population against the Hellenistic neighbors and the Roman authority.

458[*c*] See 480.

458[*d*] *Pella,* one of the leading cities of the *Decapolis* (see map; *War* I, 104, 134, 156).

458[*e*] *Scythopolis,* the occurrences there are related in 466–476.

459[*f*] *Gadara* and *Hippos,* cities of the Decapolis (the league of Ten Cities); *Gaulanitis* is the modern Gaulan Heights.

459[*g*] *Kedasa,* Kadesh-Naftali, northwest of the former Lake of Semachonitis (present Huleh in Upper Galilee) populated by Helleno-Syrians and governed by maritime Tyre (478).

459[*h*] *Ptolemais* in Acre (*War* II, 188, see map).

459[*i*] *Gaba* A Hellenist town in northwestern Samaria which had been built by Herod to house his cavalry (*War* III, 36–37); now Sha'ar Ha'amaqim, near Beth Shearim.

460[*a*] *Sebaste* is Samaria; but the village probably refers to the unprotected villages, not the fortified city. The same is true of Ascalon.

460[*b*] *Ascalon,* a free city on the southern coast. Relations between the non-Jewish inhabitants were generally hostile. At the beginning of the revolt the Jews also attacked the city but 25,000 of them were massacred. They attempted unsuccessfully to recapture it.

461[*a*] *The ring of mutual hatred encircling Judaea* The Hellenistic cities of Palestine (referred to as "Syrians" in former chapters), had grown rapidly in population and aggressiveness during the first century BC. This increase was especially noticeable through the reigns of Herod and his successors, in the respective tetrachies that they governed. Sebaste and Caesarea became strongholds of resistance against the Jewish majority. They came to resemble, in their composition, such cities as Ptolemais (Acre) and Ascalon which lay outside the borders of Herod's former kingdom and the later procuratorial province of Judaea. Moreover, because the troops garrisoned in Judaea were based on the Hellenistic cities (from which the auxiliaries were recruited) the bonds were tightened between the Roman authorities and the local Gentile inhabitants, especially since it was the restless and rebellious Jews who necessitated the use of the Roman army. At the same time, there were large Jewish populations in all the Hellenistic cities and their relations with the Syro-Hellenistic majority were usually tense. The situation in neighboring Galilee and Ptolemais was also similar, and thus they were among the first to be attacked by the Jews. Subsequently, the inhabitants of the city massacred some 2,000 Jews there. In AD 67 Ptolemais was granted the status of a Roman colony and, shortly afterwards, it became the base for the Roman legions campaigning in Galilee.

Chapter XVIII

D. THE CIVIL WAR OF AD 66

1. Massacre of the Jews at Caesarea; the Jewish reprisals along the Gentile periphery

(457) On the same day and the same hour, as if divinely ordained, the inhabitants of Caesarea massacred the Jews who lived there; in less than an hour more than 20,000 were slaughtered and Caesarea was wholly deprived of Jews [*b*], for even the fugitives were seized by Florus and sent in chains to the dockyards. (458) The news of the disaster at Caesarea infuriated the whole nation; and parties of Jews sacked the Syrian [*a*] villages and the neighboring cities [*b*] Philadelphia, Heshbon and its district, Gerasa [*c*] Pella [*d*] and Scythopolis [*e*]. (459) Next they swooped on Gadara [*f*], Hippos and Gaulanitis [*f*], destroying or setting fire to all in their path; they then advanced to Kedasa [*g*], a Tyrian village, Ptolemais [*h*], Gaba [*i*] and Casearea. (460) Neither Sebaste [*a*] nor Ascalon [*b*] withstood their fury; these they burnt and destroyed and then they razed Anthedon and Gaza. Many villages were pillaged around each of these cities and immense numbers of the captives slaughtered.

2. Massacre of Jews in Syria

(461) The Syrians [*a*] on their side killed just as many Jews; they, too, slaughtered those they caught in the cities, not only with hatred as before, but now to forestall their own peril. (462) The whole of Syria was filled with frightful disorder, and every city was divided into two camps, the survival of one depending on their anticipating the other. (463) They spent their days in bloodshed, their nights still more terrible—in terror. For though they thought they were rid of the Jews, still every city had its Judaizers [*b*], who aroused suspicion; and while they hesitated from killing offhand this equivocal element in their midst, they feared these neutrals as much as pronounced foreigners. To the slaughter of their opponents even those who had always been deemed the most harmless of men were tempted by avarice; (464) for they would plunder with impunity the property of their victims, and as if from a battlefield, carry off the spoils of the slain to their own homes; the man who gained the most was held in esteem as the most successful murderer. (465) The cities could be seen choked with unburied corpses, the dead bodies of the aged flung alongside those of infants, women without even a rag to conceal their nakedness, and the whole province full of indescribable horror; and even worse than the tales of atrocities committed was the suspense caused by the threat of evil in store.

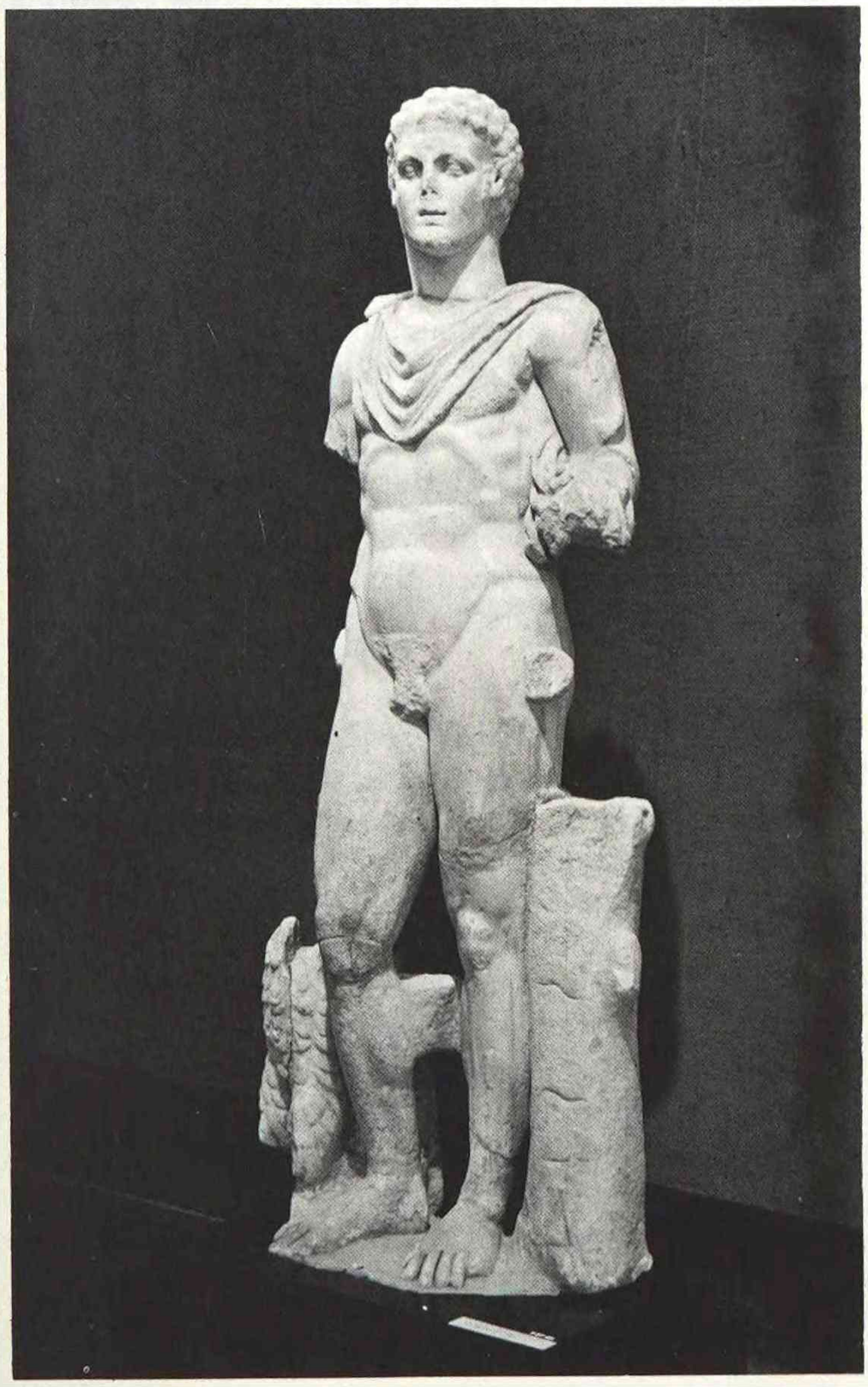
3. Treachery of the gentile Scythopolitans to their Jewish allies

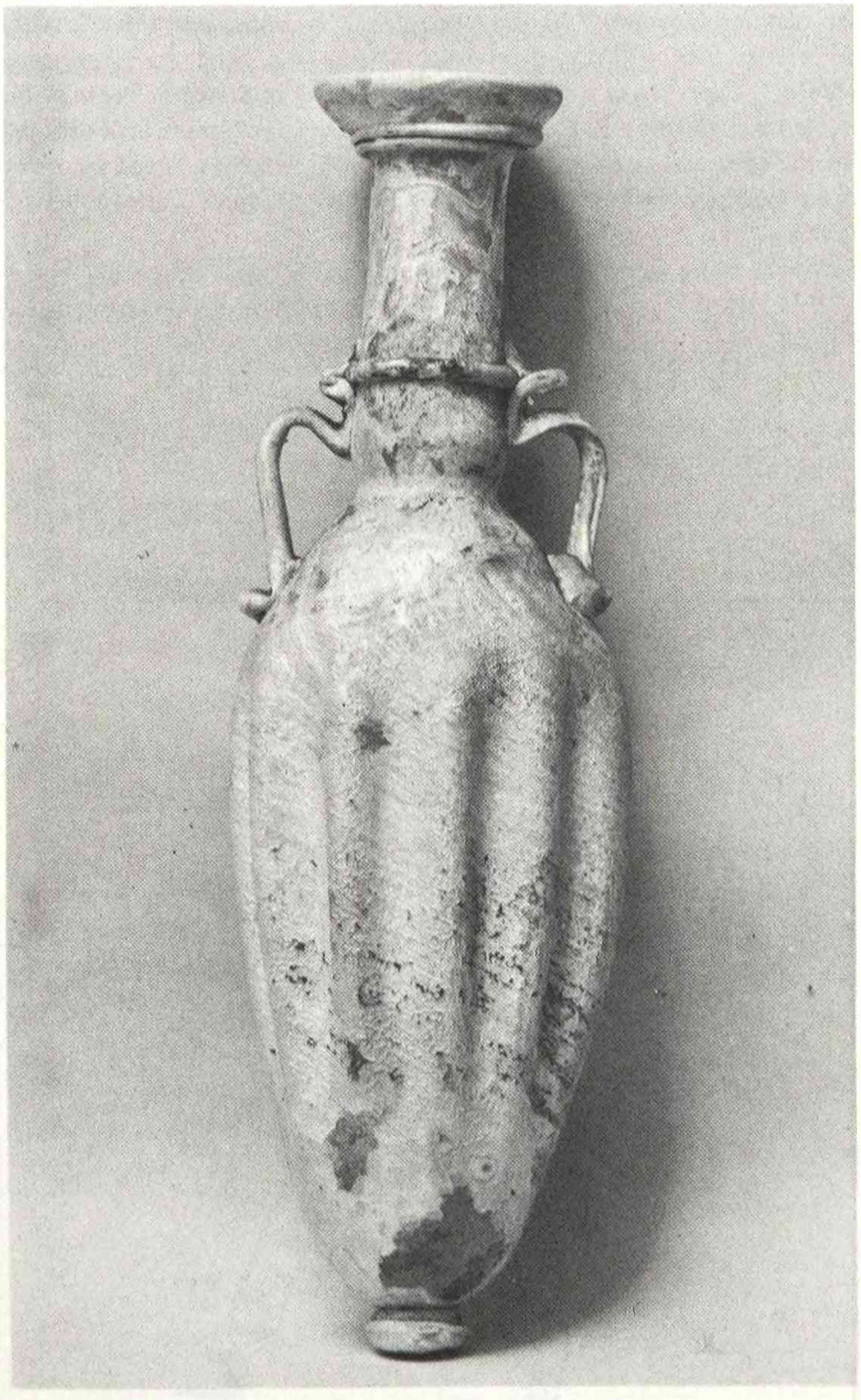
(466) So far the Jews had been faced with aliens only, but when they raided Scythopolis [*a*] they found the Jews there as enemies, for they lined up with the Scythopolitans, and regarding their own safety as of more importance than the ties of blood, they joined battle with their countrymen. (467) But suspicion was aroused by their excess of zeal; the people of Scythopolis feared that these men would attack them in the night and bring a great disaster upon them in order to offer satisfaction to their fellow Jews for their defection. So they ordered them, if they wished to demonstrate their fidelity to foreigners, to betake themselves with their families to the adjoining grove. (468) The Jews carried out the order suspecting nothing, and for two days the Scythopolitans made no move in order to gain their confidence, but on the third night they availed themselves of the opportunity when some were off guard and others asleep, and slaughtered them all—more than thirteen thousand, and looted all their possessions [*b*].

463[*b*] The *"Judaizers"* A widespread phenomenon of the first century AD was the attraction of large numbers of pagans to Judaism. (They are referred to as "Judaizers" by various ancient historians.) While some converted, most remained semiproselytes, visited the synagogues regularly on the Sabbath and holidays, and adopted many Jewish customs. Caesarea also had its "Fearers of Heaven" (*Yere'eh Shamayim* in Hebrew) as these people were often called. Josephus also mentions the "Judaizers" in Damascus (*War* II, 560) and Antioch (*War* VII, 45). They must not be confused, however, with the early Judaeo-Christians mentioned in Acts 6 and 8, or those whose archeological traces have been suggested by excavations in Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Capernaum (compare also 560 [*b*]).

466[*a*]–468[*b*] *Scythopolis* (Bethshean) was a large city and a member of the Decapolis, the league of Ten Cities, most of them situated across the Jordan. Relations between the pagan majority and the Jewish minority were friendlier here than in other cities; but this did not prevent the Jews from being massacred during the holocaust of Scythopolis. On the other hand, Josephus relates (480) that the Gerasians did not retaliate at first against the Jews. Thus events at this juncture are not clear.

Two cultures merged in Scythopolis (Bethshean) in the northern Jordan valley and borderland of Judaea. Both typified the Jewish and Hellenistic past; witness this Greek statue of Apollo found in the ruins and first century BC-AD 1 Roman vase with grooved body. The neck of the vase is applied with glass threads and its surface is irridescent





478[*a*] *Tyre,* the rich Hellenistic city, bordered on the ancient Jewish settlements of northern Galilee, and its affairs were bound up to some extent with those of Palestine (238–239 and *War* I, 232–246).

479[*b*] *Antioch* was the capital of the vast Roman province of Syria, with its own large Jewish population among an overwhelming Syro-Hellenist majority. *Sidon* lay on the coast north of Tyre.

479[*c*] *Apamaea,* a city on the river Orontes, south of Antioch.

481[*a*] *Noarus* (Noar) or Varus (in the corresponding account in *Life* 48f), meant to win the favor of the Helleno-Syrian residents of *Caesarea-Philippi,* King Agrippa's capital. These pagans hated the Jews as much as their counterparts in Caesarea on the Sea. They hoped that the Jewish revolt would prove abortive and that Varus would supplant Agrippa; details of the further massacres of Jews are related in 483 [*d*].

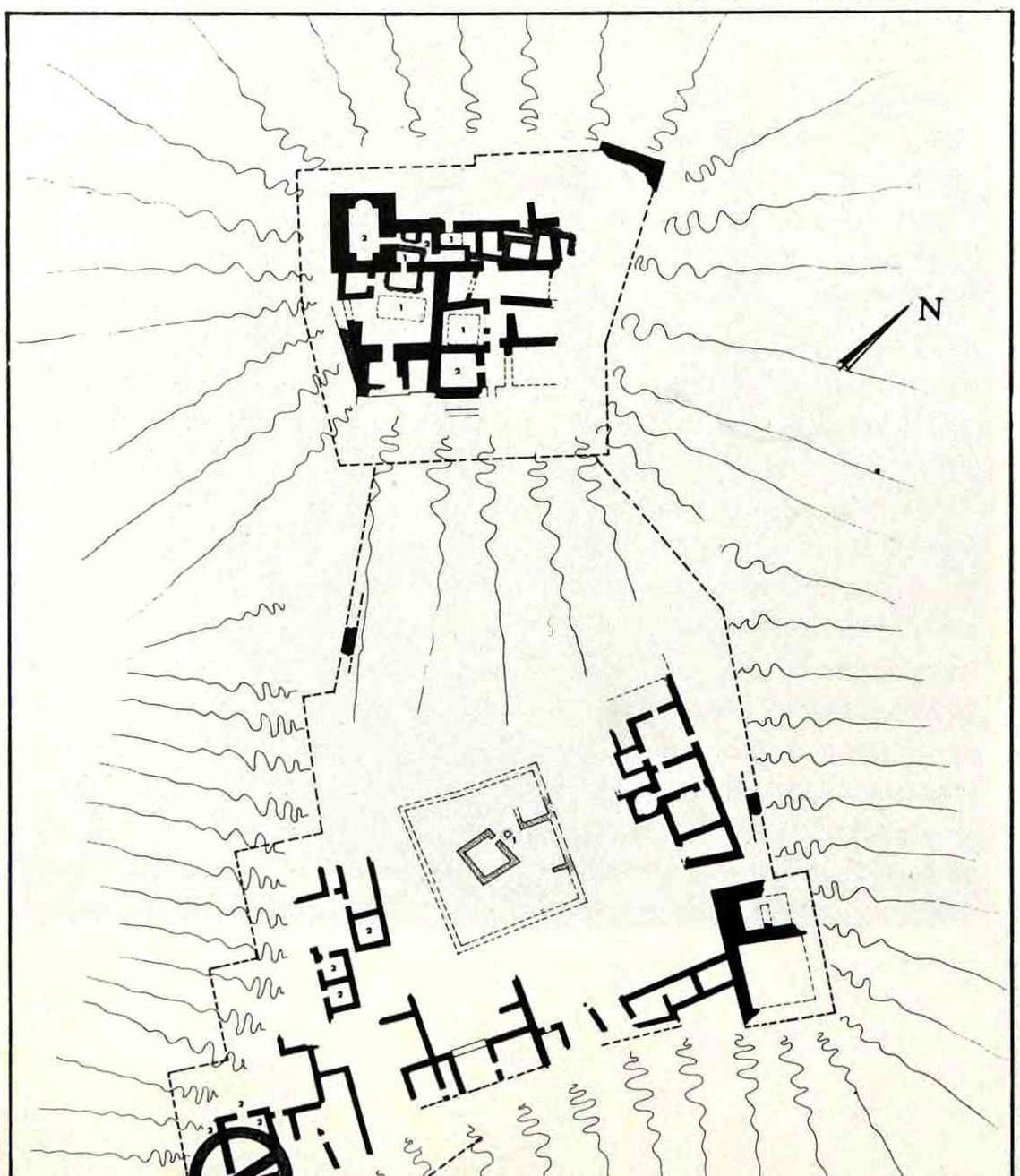
481[*b*] *Soaemus* Probably the king of Emesa (Homs in northern Syria) who, according to *War* II, 501 furnished a contingent for Cestius Gallus; he is said to be a descendant of another Soemus who, two decades previously, had ruled over Ituraea in Lebanon, according to Tacitus (*Annals* XII, 23).

482[*c*] *Batanea,* biblical Bashan in northern Transjordan. The delegation had come to Caesarea-Philippi at Noarus' own treasonable invitation.

483[*d*] *Noarus' aspirations* This episode is involved with his aspiration to supplant Agrippa, as related in another version in *Life* 52–61. The governor, Noarus, sent a Jewish group to invite the Babylonian Jewish settlers in Ecbatana of Trachonitis to visit him. A delegation of notables came to Caesarea-Philippi and were executed together with many Jews of that city because the local gentiles assured him that "the Romans would condemn King Agrippa to death for the crimes of the Jews." Agrippa exonerated and merely deprived him of his office in deference to King Soaemus, who was related to the governor, and apparently on account of the Romans, who by no means disapproved of his actions (according to G. Alon: *Jews, Judaism, and the Classical World,* p. 289, 1977).

484[*e*] *Cypros* was a fortress built by Herod in the early years of his reign (excavated by E. Netzer; *War* I, 407 [*a*]). Its capture is not related to the episodes, dealt with in pars. 481–483, which occurred far away from northern Galilee and represent another phase of Zealot rebel activities.

General plan of Cypros (after E. Netzer)



4. The heroic death of Simon, a Jewish renegade

(469) An account may be given of the fate of Simon, son of Saul, a man well-known. His bodily strength and personal courage were exceptional, but to the injury of his countrymen he abused both gifts. (470) He went out day by day and killed many Jews who were attacking Scythopolis; frequently he had routed their whole force and turned the balance of the fighting. (471) But he was overtaken by the punishment he had deserved for slaughtering his own kin. For when the men of Scythopolis had surrounded the grove and were shooting down its occupants with their javelins, he drew his sword but made no move towards the enemy as he saw their overwhelming numbers. Instead he exclaimed in a tone of deep emotion: (472) "Justly am I punished for my crimes, men of Scythopolis, I and the rest, who by murdering so many of our relatives have established our loyalty to you. Therefore, let us, who have found foreigners, understandably treacherous to us when we have utterly betrayed our own people, let us die in disgrace by our own hands as cursed wretches; for it would not be proper if we were to die by those of the enemy. (473) This, God grant, shall be at once the fit punishment for my foul crimes and the proof of my courage, so that none of my foes shall be able to boast of having slain me or gloat over my body." (474) With these words he glanced round with a look of mingled pity and rage at his own family. He had a wife, children and aged parents. (475) First seizing his father by his gray hairs he transfixed him with his sword, next killed his mother, who offered no resistance, finally his wife and children, each of them almost rushing upon the blade in haste to anticipate the enemy. (476) Then Simon, after slaying every member of his family, stood conspicuously over the bodies, and raising his right hand aloft for all to see, he plunged the sword up to the hilt into his own throat. So perished a young man, virtuous in his physical prowess and courage, but pitiable because he trusted aliens, and so met with an unavoidable tragic fate.

5. Widespread uprising against the Jews in Syria

(477) After the holocaust of Scythopolis, other cities took arms against the Jews in their respective territories. The people of Ascalon put to death 2,500; those of Ptolemais 2,000, throwing many into prison besides. (478) The Tyrians [*a*] massacred large numbers, but imprisoned the majority in chains. Similarly the inhabitants of Hippos and Gadara killed the bolder spirits and kept the timid people in custody; and so with the other cities of Syria according to the hate or fear with which each regarded their Jewish neighbors. (479) Only the people of Antioch [*b*], Sidon [*b*] and Apamaea [*c*] spared their residents and declined to kill or imprison any of the Jews, perhaps because their vast populations made them disdainful of the possibility of Jewish uprisings, but all, in my

opinion, out of pity for men who showed no revolutionary inclinations. (480) The people of Gerasa not only abstained from molesting the Jews who remained with them, but those who wished to emigrate they escorted to the frontiers.

6. Jews massacred in Agrippa's kingdom

(481) Even in Agrippa's kingdom, a conspiracy was formed against the Jews. He himself had gone to Cestius Gallus at Antioch, leaving in charge of affairs one of his friends called Noarus [*a*], a kinsman of King Soaemus [*b*]. (482) From Batanaea [*c*] came seventy men, citizens in birth and ability, the most respected of their community, to ask for a body of troops adequate to repress the insurgents if there should be any trouble in their district. (483) In the night, Noarus sent out some of the king's heavy infantry and massacred the whole deputation, committing this outrageous action without consulting Agrippa. As a result of his insatiable greed, he had deliberately and impiously murdered his countrymen, with calamitous effect on the kingdom. He continued to oppress the nation cruelly until Agrippa heard of his conduct, and though unwilling, out of respect for Soaemus, to put him to death, deprived him of his regency [*d*].

The capture of Cypros and Machaerus by the rebels

(484) The rebels now seized a fortress called Cypros [*e*] which overlooked Jericho, exterminated the garrison and levelled the defenses. (485) At about the same time the Jewish population of Machaerus [*f*] persuaded the Roman garrison to evacuate the fortress and hand it over to them. (486) The Romans, afraid that it would be taken from them by force, agreed to withdraw under a truce, and having received the necessary pledges, surrendered the fort which the people of Machaerus then occupied and garrisoned.

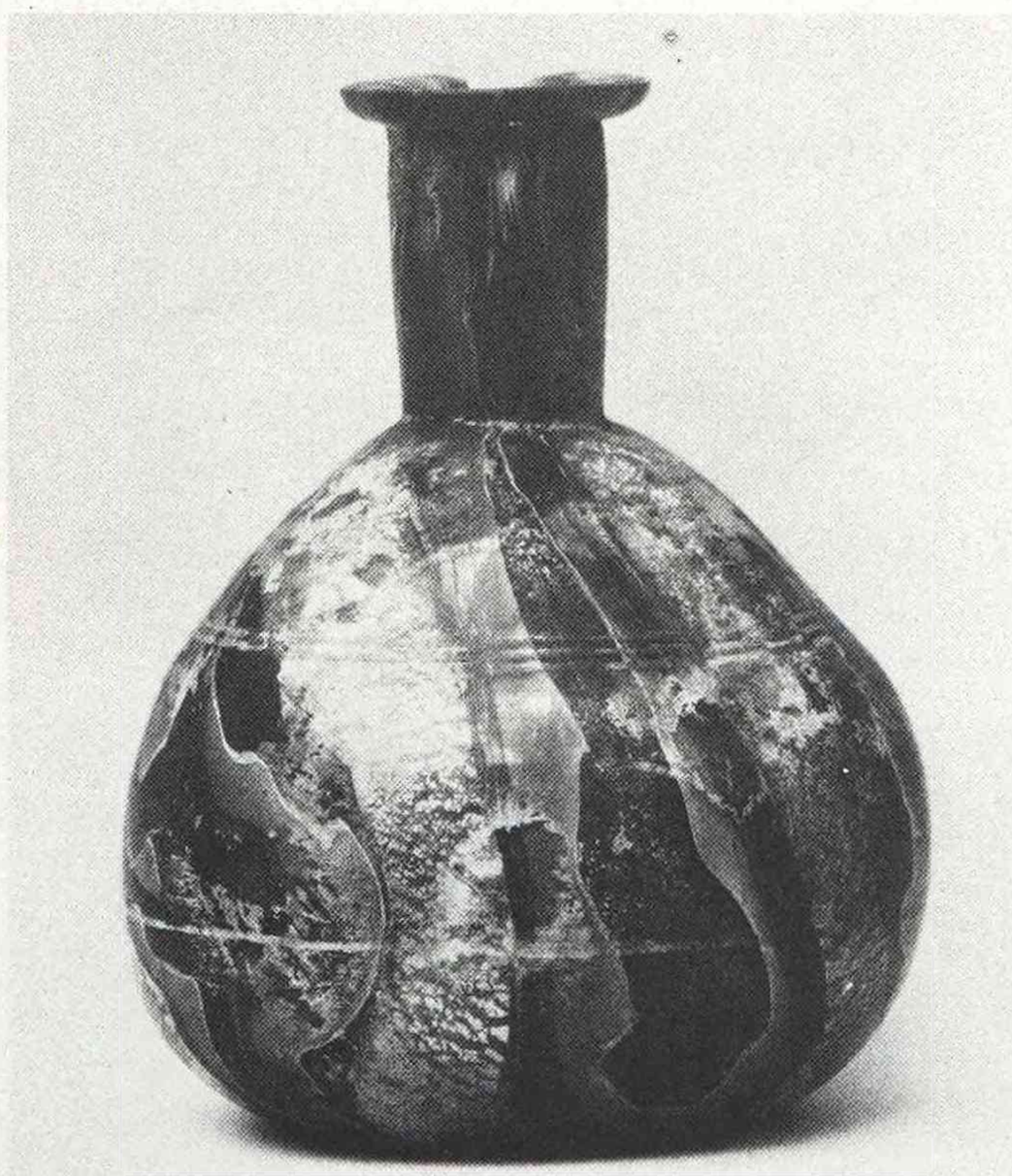
7. Greek-Jewish riots at Alexandria; history of the Alexandrian community

(487) At Alexandria there had been incessant strife between the natives and the Jewish settlers since the time when Alexander, having received their active support against the Egyptians, granted them as a reward for their alliance, the privilege to reside in the city on terms of equality with the Greeks. (488) This honor remained in force under his successors who, in addition, assigned them a quarter of their own so that they could more strictly preserve their own way of life through associating less with aliens [*a*]. Then when the Romans took over Egypt, neither the first Caesar nor any of his successors would allow the privileges granted to the Jews from Alexander's time onwards to be diminished. (489) There were, however, continual clashes with the Greeks, and as the authorities daily punished many of both sides, the strife grew even more virulent. (490) But now that disorder had broken

485[*f*] *Machaerus* was a fortress overlooking the northeastern coast of the Dead Sea (*War* I, 171 [*a*]).

488[*a*] *The Jews of Alexandria* Since the third century BC the center of Egyptian Jewry had been in Alexandria. By the Roman period two quarters of the metropolis were occupied by Jews, especially the area by the seashore, but there was no ghetto and synagogues were scattered throughout the whole city. Though they lived in a Hellenistic environment, acquired Greek language and manners, and attempted to place the intellectual values of Hellenism within the framework of Judaism, they were scrupulous in matters of purity, avoiding contamination by the pagans through the observance of dietary and religious laws which preserved their identity. The Jewish community was autonomous. The term "Macedonian" as used by Josephus is here a definite legal term (not simply ethnic) meaning that the Jews were equal in rights to the Macedonians (Greeks) and were citizens of Alexandria in the full sense of the word. Josephus maintains that the Jews had obtained equal rights with the Greeks from Alexander the Great, which appears to be an incorrect assumption. They were allowed to live "according to their ancestral laws"; they did possess autonomy in organizing their social, cultural, and religious life, and also had their own council of Elders consisting of seventy-one members, but only some of the Jews really enjoyed the full franchise and the rights of Roman citizenship. Their number did grow at the beginning of the Roman period, when obtaining Roman citizenship acquired particular importance". However, the Jewish masses could not dream of belonging to the Greek pagan *polis* as it would have seemed a betrayal of their ancestral Jewish traditions. Josephus' assumption that the Jews shared equal rights with the Greeks was made in good faith and was based on what he had heard from other sources (but not from the Alexandrian, Philo). Nevertheless the issue is not that simple. It is true to say that the Jews aspired to civic rights, that the privileges they enjoyed were very great indeed, and that they frequently aroused the hatred and envy of the Greeks. In any case, during the second century BC the legal position of the Jews deteriorated under Roman rule.

Tyre and Sidon were famed for gold, green and blue glass, like this banded mosaic bottle (first century AD)



490[*b*] Against this background serious riots broke out in 38 BC against the Jews, and again in AD 66 under the influence of the Palestine revolt.

491[*c*] *The riots in Alexandria* The historic facts are the following: At that time Roman troops were being concentrated in Alexandria (*War* II, 387) for an expedition against Ethiopia. However, all war schemes were stopped due to events in Palestine, and this had repercussions in Alexandria, where a mass meeting of citizens, called to discuss the dispatch of an embassy to the emperor Nero, ended in a battle royal between them and the Jews. The meeting was called by the Alexandrines to beg Nero to revoke the ancient rights held by the Jews, particularly when they heard that he had ignored their rights in Caesarea. The Alexandrian Jews were totally aroused by the danger of losing rights that they had enjoyed for several generations, and they could hardly have suspected that the renegade prefect Tiberius—formerly a Jew—would turn against them, probably because he did not want to be suspected of pro-Jewish bias, as his origin was well-known. Moreover, the real cause of these disturbances, as in 38 BC, was the long, standing friction between Jews and Greeks, and the explosion of anger was merely the pretext which brought these growing tensions to a head.

492[*d*]–494[*e*] *Tiberius Alexander,* the prefect (viceroy) of Egypt. (cf. *War* II, 220), who vainly attempted to make his countrymen see the folly of their intransigeance, was compelled to employ against them not only the regular garrison but a newly arrived detachment from Cyrene in the summer of 66. Later in the same year the XVth Appollinaris Legion arrived. The legionary detachments were destined for another campaign, the Caucasus, according to Tacitus (*Histories,* Book I, 10–11; Book 2, 4; Book 5, 9–11). Whatever Nero's intentions may have been, his plans were disturbed by the outbreak of rebellion in Palestine for the suppression of which these legions had to be detached.

495[*a*] *The Delta quarter of Alexandria* The fourth quarter of Alexandria. The quarters were called by the letters of the alphabet: Alpha, Beta, etc. (488 [*a*]–490 [*b*]).

499[*a*] *Cestius Gallus,* governor of Syria. (*War* II, 280, 333–334, 341, 481).

Horse racing in an amphitheater

out elsewhere as well [*b*], the riots at Alexandria became even more violent. On one occasion when the citizens of Alexandria were holding a public meeting concerning an embassy that they proposed to Nero, great numbers of Jews poured into the amphitheater along with the Greeks. (491) As soon as their opponents caught sight of them they yelled "Enemies, spies" and spring to their feet to lay hands on them. Most of the Jews took flight and dispersed, but they caught three men and dragged them off to be burnt alive [*c*]. (492) At that point the whole Jewish community rose to their defense; first they pelted the Greeks with stones, then they snatched up torches and rushed to the amphitheater, threatening to burn to death the assembled citizens to the last man. And they would actually have done this had not Tiberius Alexander, the governor of the city [*d*] tempered their rage. (493) In his first attempt to call them to reason he employed no force, quietly sending respected citizens among them, urging them to desist and not to provoke the Romans to attack them. But the rioters treated this appeal with contempt and heaped abuse upon Tiberius.

8. The revolt and massacre of the Alexandrian Jews

(494) When he realized that nothing less than a major calamity would quell the rebels, he let loose among them the two Roman legions stationed in the city [*e*], together with two thousand soldiers who happened to have come from Libya, to complete the ruin of the Jews. He gave them leave not merely to kill them but to plunder their property and burn down their houses. (495) The soldiers thereupon rushed into the quarter of the city called "Delta" [*a*] where the Jews were concentrated, and carried out their orders, but not without bloodshed on their own side; for the Jews closed their ranks, put the best armed men among their numbers in front, and held their ground for a very long time; but when once they gave way, wholesale carnage ensued. (496) Death came upon them in every form; some were overtaken in the open, others driven into their houses to which the Romans set fire after looting their contents; they felt no pity for infants, no respect for years; (497) all ages fell right and left, until the whole district was deluged with blood and fifty thousand corpses were heaped up; nor would the remnant have survived had they not begged for mercy. Alexander, now moved by compassion, ordered the Romans to withdraw. (498) They, with their habitual obedience, ceased massacring at the first signal; but the populace of Alexandria, through the intensity of their, hate, were disinclined to obey and could hardly be dragged away from the corpses.

9. Cestius Gallus' assumption of command in the North

(499) Such was the calamity that befell the Jews of Alexandria. Cestius [*a*] decided not to remain inactive now that war was being made upon the Jews on all

sides. (500) Accordingly, he set out from Antioch at the head of the twelfth legion in full strength, with two thousand hand-picked men from each of the other legions [*b*] and in addition six cohorts of infantry and four squadrons of cavalry; besides these he had the auxiliary contingents furnished by the kings, of which Antiochus [*c*] furnished two thousand horses and three thousand foot soldiers, all bowmen; Agrippa with the same number of foot soldiers and nearly two thousand horses, (501) while Soaemus [*d*] followed with four thousand, of whom a third were mounted and the majority bowmen. With these troops he advanced upon Ptolemais. (502) Further auxiliaries in very large numbers were collected from the cities. These, though inferior in experience to the regulars, made good their deficiency in technical training by their enthusiasm and their hatred of the Jews. Agrippa personally accompanied Cestius, to guide and to provide for the needs of the army. (503) With a detachment of these troops, Cestius marched against a fortified city in Galilee called Chabul [*e*] on the frontier between Ptolemais and Jewish territory. (504) He found it deserted by its inhabitants, since they fled into the hills, but full of valuables of all kinds, which he allowed his soldiers to pillage. The town itself, whose beauty he admired, with its houses built in the style of

500[*b*] The Roman troops left in charge, according to Tacitus, were the Xth Legion Fretensis, the XIIth Fulminata and the seasoned XIIIth Gallica and VIth Ferrata.

500[*c*] This was Antiochus VI, king of Commagene in northern Syria (*War* VII, 219), one of the client princes of Rome.

501[*d*] *Soaemus* see 481. It appears that only half of the expeditionary forces were made up of seasoned legionaries, and Cestius himself had no independent military authority or ripe experience. This army numbered 12,000 legionaries, 6,000 cohorts and cavalry and 14,000 auxiliaries provided by the client princes. About this time another army of 50,000 had been sent to Parthia. It would be wrong to accept the interpretation of some modern historians, among them A. Momigliano (*Cambridge Ancient History,* X, p. 856, 1971) that "Cestius Gallus, sent into Palestine to restore calm, had to turn and safeguard Jews and non-Jews alike". The target was the Jews who met them as enemies.

503[*e*] *Chabul,* biblical Kabul, the Israelite town presented by King Solomon to King Hiram, a thousand years earlier (II Kings 9, 13).

Main street dating to the Herodian period of Antipatris (Tel Apheq)

506[*f*] While in Acre, Cestius' army was joined by many auxiliaries from Lebanon (Beirut) who set out to loot the Jews of Kabul and the Galilean communities to his rear. When he proceeded to Judaea, the Jews of Kabul and the Galilean Jews destroyed these auxiliaries while they were busy looting.

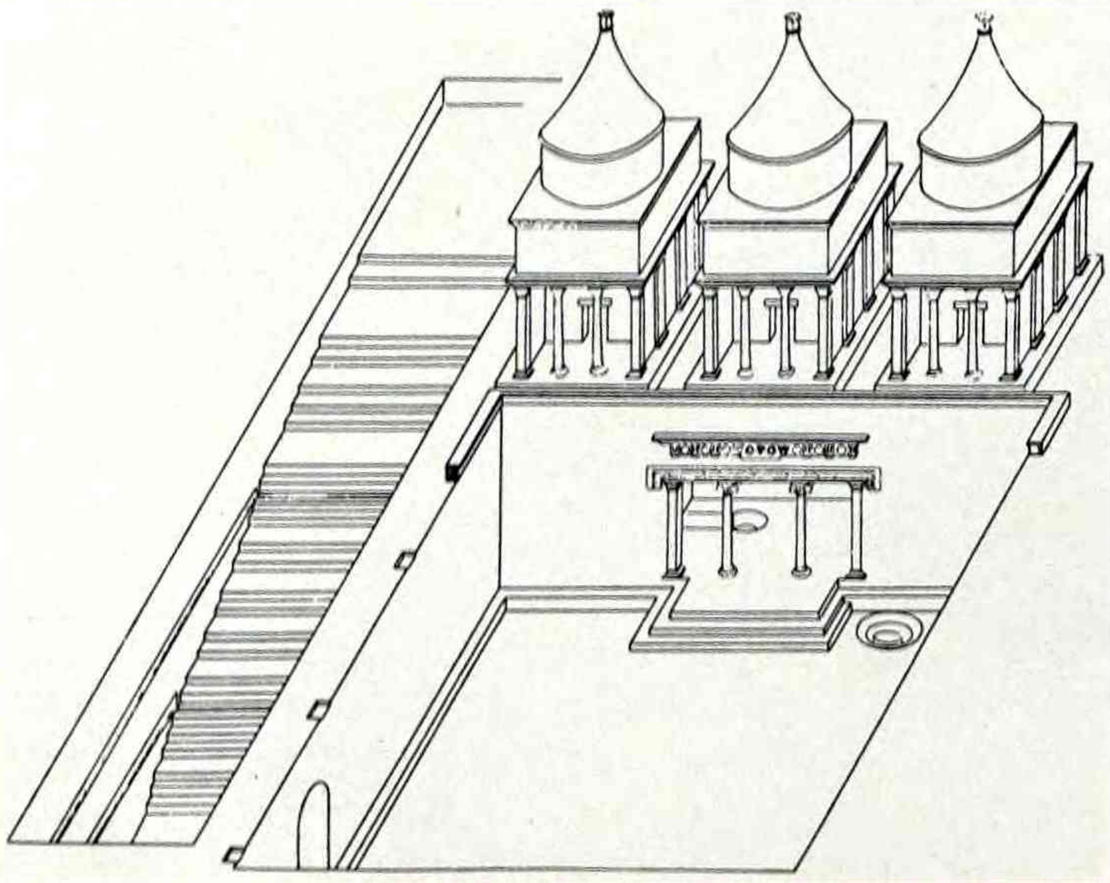
509[*a*] The cruel carnage in Jaffa, which spared neither women nor the aged, may possibly be accounted for by the losses of the Romans in the rear (506 [*f*]).

509[*b*] *Narbatene* (Narbata). When the Jews, as related in *War* II, 291, fled from Caesarea to Narbatene, they did not just abandon their defiled synagogue but tried to save the scrolls of the Law, and to rejoin the nearest populated Jewish district that was not exposed to the pagans. It is referred to in par. 291 as Narbata and is situated 22 kms from Caesarea, near the Arab village of Arrabeh (whose name derives originally from the ancient Israelite Arbata). Narbata, well fortified, was perched on a high hill and commanding all the approaches and exits from Caesarea; the Romans could not let it interfere with their overall plans of subjecting the land; whereupon Cestius Gallus at the head of a large army had to lay siege, namely, by erecting a circumvallation, building a stone camp, raising earthworks and shelling the walls with ballistas. Although Josephus does not mention this—albeit not intentionally—A. Zartel who dug up the area in 1980 discovered three large underground reservoirs (which could help the Nabateans sustain the siege) and a projectile from a ballista at the bottom of a reservoir. Cestius Gallus then proceeded to Jerusalem around November AD 66.

511[*a*] *Sepphoris,* in plain terms, surrendered (in the fall of AD 66) because, like Tiberias, it was one of the cities that opposed revolution and, like the Syrian-Jewish population on the borderlines and in Syria, kept aloof during all the uprisings. *Asamon* is the high Mount Atzmon which donuates the Galilee's skyline.

511[*b*] The Sepphoris insurgents, however, fled to the high desolate mountain of *Asamon* (Atzmon in Hebrew). This quelled the rebellion in Galilee for a short time (568 [*f*]).

Restoration design of the memorial which stood at the entrance of the tombs of the kings of Adiabene and Queen Helena, converts to Judaism in the first century BC. The monuments are known as the "Tombs of the Kings," though they are not the biblical kings of Judah (see 520[b])



those of Tyre, Sidon and Berytus, he set on fire. (505) He then overran the district, looted everything in his way and then returned to Ptolemais. (506) However, the Syrians, especially the men from Beirut [*f*], while burning the surrounding villages were busy looting. The Jews plucked up courage and on learning that Cestius had departed swooped unexpectedly upon the troops which he had left behind and destroyed about two thousand of them.

10. His campaign on the coast

(507) Cestius left Ptolemais and marched to Caesarea, but sent forward a detachment of his force to Jaffa, with orders to garrison the town if they succeeded in taking it by surprise; but if the inhabitants had obtained previous intelligence of their approach, they were to wait for him to bring up the main body of the army. (508) These troops advanced in two parties, by sea and land, and easily carried the town by an attack from both directions. The inhabitants had no time to flee, much less to prepare for battle. and the Romans burst in, slew them all with their families, and looted and burnt the town; (509) the number killed was eight thousand four hundred [*a*]. In the same way, Cestius dispatched a strong force of cavalry to the toparchy of Narbatene [*b*] bordering on Caesarea. This force ravaged the country and killed a large number of the inhabitants, looting their property and burning down their villages.

11. Reducing Galilee

(510) Into Galilee he dispatched Caesennius Gallus, commander of the twelfth legion, with such force as he thought sufficient to reduce that province. (511) Sepphoris, the strongest city in Galilee, received him with open arms [*a*] and, following moderation shown by this city, the other towns remained quiet. All the insurgents and brigands in the district fled to the mountain in the heart of Galilee which faces Sepphoris [*b*] and is called Asamon; against these Gallus led his troops. As long as the enemy held a position of advantage, they easily beat off the advancing Romans and killed some two hundred of them; (512) but when the Romans by a turning movenent gained the higher ground, they were quickly put at a disadvantage; lightly armed, they could not withstand the charge of the heavy-armed legionnaires, nor when routed, outdistance the cavalry, so that while a few succeeded in concealing themselves to evade capture, more than two thousand were killed.

Chapter XIX

1. Marching upon Jerusalem (October AD 66, or the month of Tishri)

(513) Gallus, seeing no further signs of revolt in Galilee, returned with his troops to Caesarea;

whereupon Cestius resumed his march with his entire army and entered Antipatris [*a*]. He learned that a considerable body of Jews had assembled in a tower called Aphekos [*a*] and sent a detachment to attack them. (514) But before a blow was struck, the Jews scattered in fear and the Romans, on invading their camp, found it evacuated and burnt it and the neighboring villages. (515) From Antipatris, Cestius advanced to Lydda [*b*] which he found deserted; to keep the Feast of Tabernacles the whole population had gone to Jerusalem. (516) Fifty of those who did appear he killed, and after burning down the town, he resumed his advance, and, ascending through Beth-Horon [*c*], encamped in a place called Gabaon [*c*] fifty furlongs from Jerusalem.

2. The Jews' successful attack outside Jerusalem

(517) The Jews, seeing that war was now approaching the capital, abandoned their feast and rushed to arms, and with full confidence in their numbers, but without order, leaped boisterously into the fray, disregarding the seventh day's rest, for it was the Sabbath [*a*] which they usually observed with special reverence. (518) But the passion that shook them out of their piety carried them to victory in the battle; they fell upon the Romans with such fury that they broke and penetrated their ranks, killing many. (519) Had the cavalry, with part of the infantry which was not so hard pressed, wheeled around to the relief of the broken line, Cestius with his whole army would have been in jeopardy. Five hundred and fifty Romans were killed—four hundred infantry and the rest cavalry; the Jews lost only twenty-two. (520) The most distinguished for valor in the Jewish ranks were Monobazus and Cenedaeus, kinsmen of Monobazus [*b*], King of Adiabene, closely followed by Niger of Peraea and Silas the Babylonian, who had deserted to the Jews from the army of King Agrippa [*c*]. (521) Their frontal attack halted, the Jews retreated to the city, but from the back of their lines, Simon, son of Gioras [*a*], fell upon the Romans from the rear as they were mounting towards Beth-Horon [*a*], cut up a large part of their rear guard, and carried off numbers of their mules which he then drove into the city. (522) While Cestius remained in his former quarters, the Jews occupied the heights and kept guard on the columns, clearly not intending to remain inactive if the Romans began to march.

3. Agrippa's vain attempt to confer with the Jews

(523) At this point, Agrippa, realizing that not even a Roman army was safe when such a huge force occupied the surrounding mountains, decided to try to confer with the Jews; he hoped either to prevail on all to cease hostilities, or at least detach from their opponents those who did not share the views of the war party. (524) Accordingly, he sent his two friends, both known to the Jews, Borcius and Phoebus, with an of-

513[*a*] *Aphekos* or *Antipatris* was the newer town built on the lower slope of verdant biblical Aphek mentioned in Joshua 12, 18, near the springhead of the River Yarkon, whence the name of the Tower Aphekos which retained the name Aphek. Antipatris had prospered again since Hellenistic times and became a popular Roman resort, as evidenced by a sumptuous Roman mausoleum uncovered there recently. A *forum,* a *cardo* (main thoroughfare) and a large gate opening onto four roads were discovered in 1979, (cf. *War* I, 99, 417).

515[*b*] Nothing could stop the Jews of Lydda (Lod) from participating in the pilgrimage, as if no war existed, for they trusted in God to protect the land.

516[*c*] *The Beth-Horon* hill pass led from the coastal plain to Gibeon (16½ miles from Jerusalem) cf. 5446.

517[*a*] It was the Sabbath of Pentecost, when the town was full of pilgrims; the learned leaders among the Zealots, as well as the sages of the Pharisee School of Shammai, allowed the fighting of a holy war to proceed on the consecrated day. The Jews attacked the Romans at Gibeon and occupied strategic positions in the surrounding hills (522).

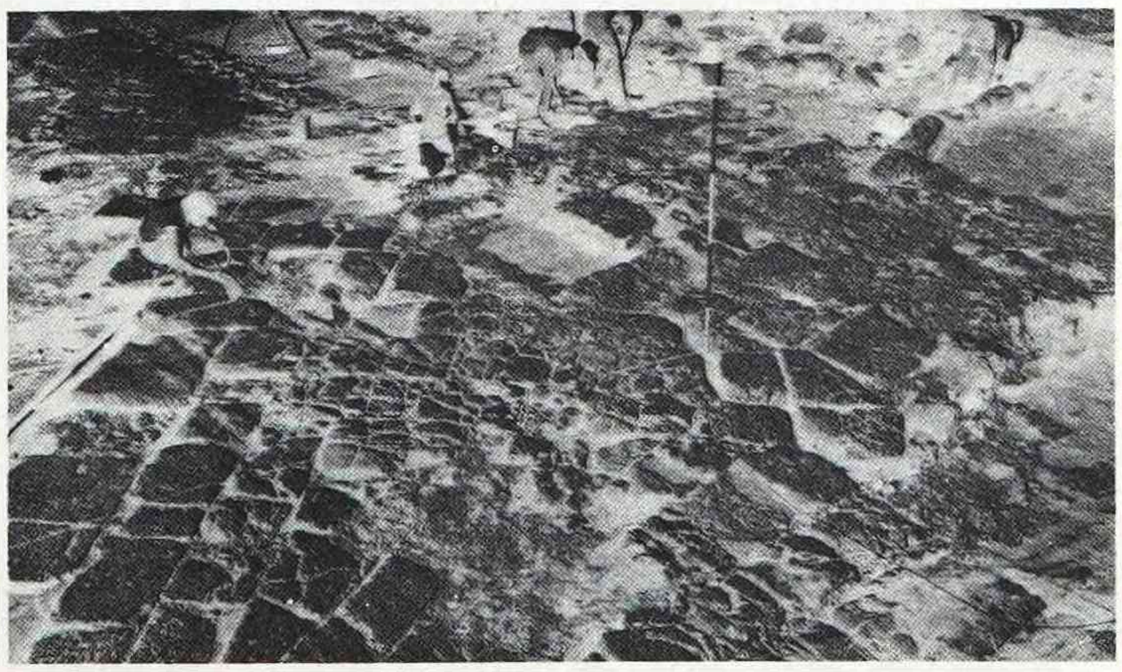
520[*b*] *Monobazus and Cenedaeus* of the royal family of King Monobazus of Adiabene in Mesopotamia, who had converted to Judaism. The conversion occurred in the days of Prince Izates under the influence of a local Jewish merchant, Hananiah. The prince, his mother Helen and brother Monobazus observed Judaism while they reigned over their kingdom and gained fame for their generous gifts to the Temple and to the people of Jerusalem. They built for themselves palaces and a lavish burial monument known as the "Tomb of the Kings" (cf. *War* II, 388, 520; V, 147, 252, 474).

The existence of a Jewish state in Adiabene in Mesopotamia of necessity also affected overall Jewish war strategy and Rome's eastern policy. It helped to bolster the self-confidence of the Jews in Judaea (*War* II, 388) who, at the beginning of their revolt, expected to receive tangible support from this source. Members of the royal family of Adiabene (*War* II, 520; V, 55 [*d*]) in fact took part in the revolt from the days of the struggle with Cestius Gallus up to the very end, *(War* V, 474; VI, 356); but officially Adiabene, an ally of the Parthians, abstained from open military intervention. As the Parthians were afraid of any further clash with the Romans, the kingdom of Adiabene did not dare to engage in open warfare of its own.

520[*c*] *King Agrippa II* had settled Babylonian Jews in Batanaea (Bashan) in southern Syria, and they formed effective fighting units.

521[*a*] Simon Bar Giora ("son of the convert") led a band of Zealots since the early stages of the war. He was an extreme democrat, proclaiming the equality of all and liberating the slaves. His further exploits will be related in *War* IV, V, VII.

Excavations of Antipatris



fer of a treaty on the part of Cestius, and of a sure pardon by the Romans for their offenses if they laid down their arms and returned to their allegiance. (525) But the insurgents [*b*] fearing that the prospect of an amnesty would induce the entire army to go over to Agrippa, violently assaulted his emissaries. (526) Phoebus was murdered before he had uttered a word, Borcius was wounded but managed to escape. Citizens, who protested at this outrage were attacked with stones and clubs and driven into the city.

4. Cestius' occupation of the Bezetha suburb

(527) Cestius, seeing that these internal dissensions in Jerusalem presented an opportunity for attack, brought up his entire army, routed the Jews, and pursued them to Jerusalem. (528) He pitched his camp on the so-called Mt. Scopus [*a*], seven furlongs from the city, and suspended all attack upon it, perhaps expecting that the defenders would surrender, but he sent out many foraging parties to the surrounding villages to collect grain. On the fourth day, the thirtieth of the month of Hyperberetaeus, he deployed his forces and led them into the city. (529) For the people were under the thumb of the insurgents, and the latter, overawed by the orderly discipline of the Romans, abandoned the suburbs and retreated into the inner city and the Temple Mount. (530) Cestius, on arrival, set fire to the district known as Bezetha [*b*] or "New City" and the so-called Timber Market; he then proceeded to the Upper city and encamped opposite the royal palace [*c*]. (531) If he had chosen at that very hour to force his way through the walls he would have captured the City immediately, and the war would have been brought to an end. But then his camp prefect Tyrannius Priscus [*d*] and most of the cavalry officers, bribed by Florus [*e*], dissuaded him from the attempt. (532) Thus it came about that the war lasted so long and the Jews drained the cup of irretrievable disaster [*f*].

5. Cestius' attack on the inner city and the Temple Mount

(533) Many of the leading citizens, at the suggestion of Ananus, the son of Jonathan [*a*] now sent invitations to Cestius, promising to open the gates to him. (534) He, however, filled with anger, disdain and partly with incredulity [*b*], hesitated until the insurgents, discovering the betrayal, pulled Ananus and his associates from the wall and drove them with showers of stones into their houses; then, posting themselves on the towers, they kept up a fire on the enemy who were attempting to scale the walls. (535) For five days the Romans pressed their attacks on all sides but made no progress; on the sixth, Cestius led a large force of picked men with the archers to an assault on the north side of the Temple [*c*]. (536) The Jews from the roof of the portico [*d*] resisted the attack and repeatedly drove back those who reached the wall, but at length,

525[*d*] The insurgents consisted of Zealots and their followers. Those who resisted them were the more prosperous Jews whose views were closer to those of the pacifist Agrippa II and of many Pharisaic leaders, who tended to denounce them as "brigands" (Josephus also denounced them in these terms, after the defeat) because the rebels strove by violence to maintain an independent Jewish state against Rome. For them, at this stage, no armed clash could decide the struggle with the mighty empire, but the power of the spirit alone, according to holy tradition. The changed attitude came a little later (562, 568; 647–654).

528[*a*] *Scopus* The hill northeast of Jerusalem which commanded "a view of the city," whence its name. Cf. *Antiq.* XI, 329, where it is called *Saphein,* a Grecized form of the Hebrew "tsofim" meaning *view* as it is called to this day (and is the site of the Hebrew University). A vast water reservoir and the remains of what appears to be a watchtower were discovered on the hill. The reservoir may have kept the watchtower supplied with water. The remains date apparently to the first century BC, and may be identified with Josephus' Scopus.

530[*b*] *Bezetha* (Beth-Zeta) formed part of the New City (*War* II, 328) which expanded in a northerly direction beyond the Second Wall. It was surrounded by the Third Wall built by Agrippa I AD 37–44. In other words, Bezetha lay between the two walls. "It encircled the New City lying to the north of Jerusalem on its western, northern and eastern sides comprising... the spacious quarter known as Bezetha. The ambitious plan of the Third Wall of Agrippa could not be completed... and a last attempt was made to complete it during the great rebellion (AD 66–70) right up to the capture of Jerusalem" (B. Mazar, *The Mountain of the Lord,* pp. 82–83; see map). This area contained the main Jerusalem market and the wood was situated outside the Second Wall in view of the danger of a fire in the older sections. Since the uncompleted wall was faulty at this juncture, Cestius advanced to the Second Wall after setting fire to the Wood Market.

530[*c*] *The royal palace* dominated the Upper City within the Second Wall (see map). Had Cestius broken through this wall and the bastions surrounding the Temple Mount, he would have captured both the Upper and Lower City.

531[*d*] *Tyrannius* was the quartermaster general.

531[*e*] *Florus,* pulling things from his seat at Caesarea, did not want Cestius to reach this goal, fearing that the conquest of the country would appear too easy. According to Josephus, he wanted events to culminate in a great revolt and thus cover up and justify his iniquities and blunders.

532[*b*] A very apt observation, as this is borne out by all the subsequent history of the war.

A public building of the late Roman period, situated on the eastern side of the Forum of Antipatris

overwhelmed by the hail of missiles, gave way. (537) The front rank of the Romans then planted their bucklers against the wall and on those the second row rested theirs and so on, till they formed a protective covering known as "the tortoise," from which the missiles glanced off harmlessly, while the soldiers undermined the wall and prepared to set fire to the gate of the Temple Mount.

6. Cestius overtaken by disaster; his retrant

(538) Utter panic now seized the insurgents, and many now began to run from the city, believing that it would fall any minute. The people thereupon took heart again, and the more the wretches [*a*] gave ground, the nearer did the former advance to open the gates and welcome Cestius as a benefactor. (539) If only he had persevered with the siege a little longer, he would soon have captured the city, but I suppose that God [*b*], because of those wretches, had already turned away even from his sanctuary and would not permit that day to witness the end of the war.

7. (540) At any rate, Cestius, aware of neither the despair of the besieged nor the temper of the people, suddenly recalled his troops, abandoned hope though he had not suffered any reverse, and, unexpectedly retreated from the city. (541) With this surprising change, the insurgents, plucking up courage, dashed out to attack his rearguard and killed a considerable number of cavalry and infantry. (542) Cestius spent that night in his camp on the Scopus Hill. His continued retreat on the following day invited further opposition from the enemy; dogging his heels, they attacked the rear and, surrounding the troops on both sides, they hurled their spears on the flanks of the column. (543) The rear ranks dared not turn and face those who were striking them from behind, because they thought an enormous army was pursuing them; the rest did not venture to beat off those who were pressing their flanks, since they were heavily armed and afraid to open out their ranks while they saw that the Jews were lightly armed and prepared to dash in among them. Consequently, they suffered heavily without any retaliation upon their foes. (544) Throughout the march men were continually being struck, torn from the ranks, and dropping to the ground. At last, after many casualties, including Priscus, commander of the sixth legion, Longinus [*a*], a tribune, and Aemilius Jucundus, commander of a troop of horses, managed with difficulty to reach their former camp at Gibeon [*b*], having further abandoned the greater part of their baggage. (545) Cestius halted there for two days at a loss what to do, but on the third, seeing the numbers of the enemy greatly swell and all the surrounding country swarming with Jews, he decided that the delay had been detrimental and that if he remained any longer he would have more enemies still.

533[*a*] *Ananus* son of the murdered high priest Jonathan (*War* II, 256) and his followers who opposed the patriotic enthusiasm of the Zealots.

534[*b*] *Cestius* was incapable of distinguishing between "friends" (of the Romans) and their implacable enemies, and made no distinction between the "people" and the "bandits" (Zealots). In his anger against the Jews and because he lacked complete trust in them, Cestius ignored their advance and dallied until the Zealots became aware of the contemplated treachery of Ananus' men, and hurled them from the high walls of the Temple Mount.

535[*c*]–536[*d*] The north side of the fortified Temple Mount could only be reached through the northern gate, the *Tadi Gate,* as Cestius' attack came from that direction. The porticoes over which the Zealots resisted the attacks were the northern one-storied porticoes of the vast Temple Mount esplanade (see diagram, *War* IV, 580–582).

538[*a*] The "wretches" were the Zealots who Josephus, in retrospect, blamed for the eventual disaster. In the Talmud they are called *Qana'im* in a meliorative sense, and Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai, though a pacifist by inclination, addressed them as "my son." Jewish tradition took pride in the deeds of these "men of Jerusalem" whom they glorified as national heroes. Tradition has it that they were men who erred in their policy and acts, but were not as wicked and depraved as Josephus, as historian, portrayed them.

539[*b*] It is no wonder that Josephus invoked God's will to account for Cestius' sudden withdrawal. What accounted for it may have been fear of an attack on his flanks and rear. He desisted from further attacks in the face of the heroic resistance.

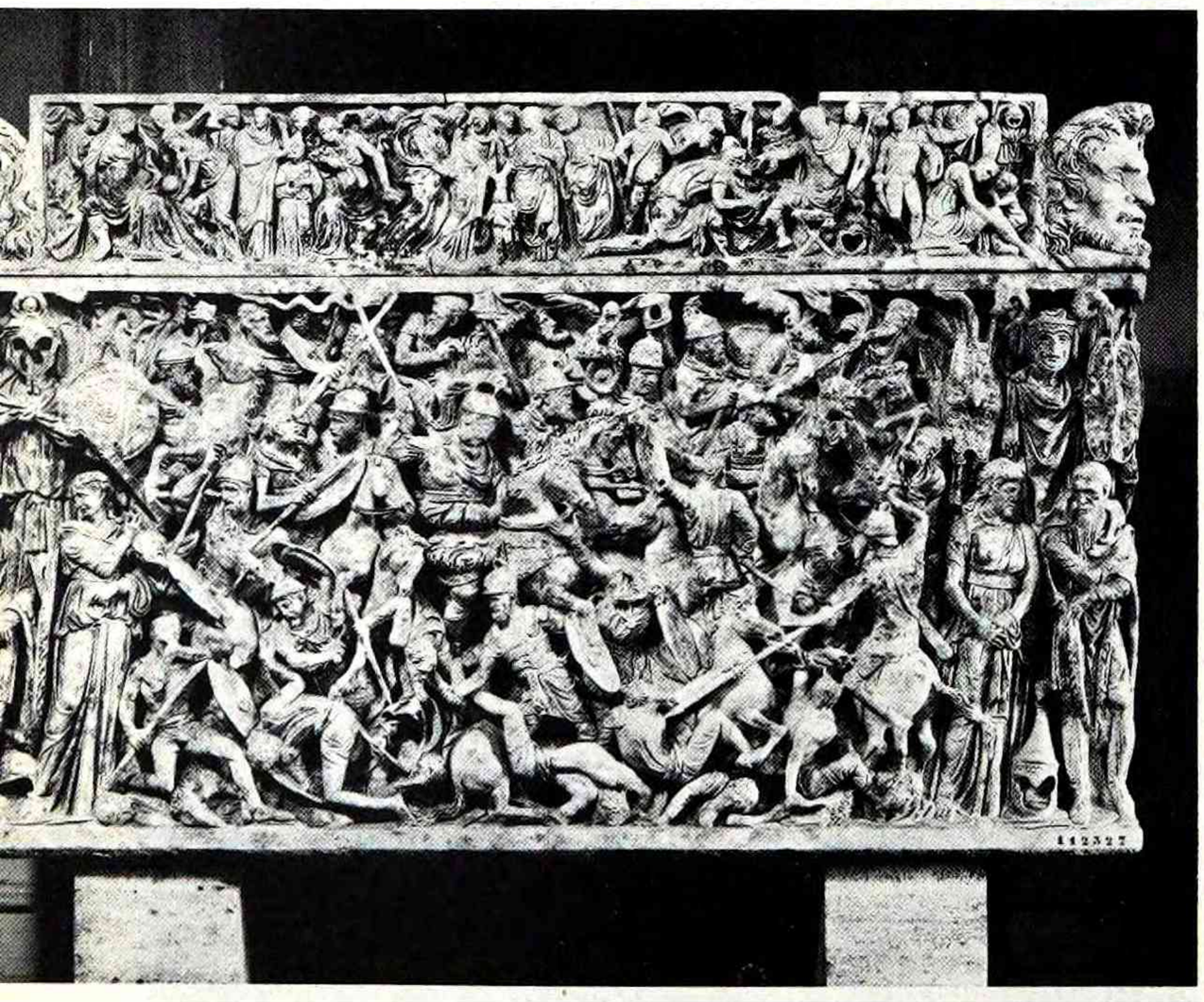
544[*a*] May be identified with Jacundus, the cavalry commander at Caesarea *(War* II, 291).

544[*b*] *Gibeon* (the correct name of the site) has been immortalized by Joshua's defeat of the fleeing Canaanite kings (Joshua 10, 1) and Judah the Maccabee's rout of the Greeks. It is difficult to understand why the Roman commander chose this hazardous route instead of the northern road through Samaria; but Josephus does not provide details of the possible obstacles placed by Jewish rebels in that direction. Instead Cestius chose the route he had come by (514–517) which led to the coastal plain, namely, Lod and Antipatris which were held by the Romans.

The Forum (city-square) of Antipatris; uncovering a tetrapylon, the base of a decorative arch

546[*a*] The machines were the famous siege artillery engines and catapults which are illustrated below (*War* III, 213–216).
546[*b*]–547[*b*] *The descent of Beth-Horon* started at Upper Beth Horon (altitude 670 m.) which lay on a plateau; but the defile, about 1 km. long, leading to Lower Beth-Horon at the foot of the pass, is steep and narrow, a real death trap.
549[*c*] The well-timed sallies of the Jews had converted the retreat into a rout. The XIIth Legion also lost its consecrated eagle.
550[*d*] Namely Lower Beth-Horon at the bottom of the pass.
551[*a*] A distance of 5.7 km. (3½ miles).
553[*b*] The machine and catapults were a prize which proved of great value to the Jews during the subsequent siege of Jerusalem.
555[*c*] The rout occurred in November AD 66, namely, early in the thirteenth year of Nero's reign, which began on October 13th, AD 54 and not on the twelfth, as stated by Josephus.
556[*a*] *The flight of Costobar, Saul and Philip* is an episode which seems to be a duplicate of events in Jerusalem related above (*War* II, 418) after the abortive siege of the palace in the struggle of Menahem and Eleazar. Philip had escaped soon after (as related in *Life* 46) and Josephus does not mention that he returned. More likely, his flight from Jerusalem occurred a few months before Cestius' defeat.
557[*b*] The story of Antipas' execution is related in *War* IV, 140.
558[*c*] *Achaia* in Greece, where Nero toured early in AD 67.
558[*d*] Yet we learn nothing about any punishment meted out to Florus. Perhaps he may have been banished.
559[*a*] Josephus does not include the Damascus massacre among those related in a previous chapter; this must therefore have happened shortly after Cestius' defeat.
560[*b*] The "God-fearing" wives from another city, Antioch in Pisidia of Asia Minor are mentioned in Acts 13, 50. To please the Jews in their midst, there pious women urged their people to chase away Paul and Barnabas. Historically, the manifestation of such God-fearing men and women in the eastern part of the Roman empire played an important role in the emergence of early Judaeo-Christianity (463[*b*]).

Battle scene portrayed on a Roman sacrophagus (Terme Museum, Rome)



8. Disaster at the pass of Beth-Horon

(546) To speed his retreat, he gave orders to retrench everything that slowed down the column. The mules, asses and all beasts of burden were slaughtered, except those that carried missiles and machines of war [*a*]; these they clung to for their own use, especially as they feared that the Jews would capture them and use them against themselves. Then Cestius led his army down to Beth-Horon [*b*]. (547) On the open ground their movements were less harassed by the Jews, but once the Romans were crowded in the columns and had begun the descent [*b*], one party of the enemy got ahead of them and barred their exit; others pushed the rearguard down into the ravine, while the main body lined the high ground and covered the legions with showers of arrows. (548) Here, while the infantry were unable to defend themselves, the cavalry were in still greater danger, for they could not advance in an orderly manner down the road while being pelted, and the steep slope made it impossible for horsemen to charge the enemy. (549) On either side were precipices and ravines into which they slipped and were hurled to destruction; there was no way to flee and no conceivable means of defense; in their utter helplessness the troops were reduced to groans and the wailings of despair that were answered by the war-whoop of the Jews with shouts of both exultation and rage [*c*]. (550) Cestius and his entire army were, indeed, very nearly captured; only the descent of darkness enabled the Romans to find refuge in Beth-Horon [*d*]. The Jews occupied all points in the surroundings and kept a lookout for their departure.

9. Flight of Cestius

(551) Despairing now of openly continuing the march, Cestius laid plans for secret flight. Picking out some four hundred of his bravest men, he posted them on the roofs, instructing them to shout out the watchwords of the camp sentries so that the Jews would believe that the entire force was still on the spot; he himself with the remainder of his men advanced without a sound another thirty furlongs [*a*]. (552) At daybreak the Jews discovered that the Roman quarters were deserted, and rushing at the four hundred who had tricked them, quickly dispatched them with javelins and then hastened in pursuit of Cestius. (553) He had gained a long lead in the night, and, when day came, quickened his flight to such a pace that the men in consternation and fright abandoned the battering-rams, catapults, and most of the other machines that the Jews then captured and afterwards employed against those who had abandoned them [*b*]. (554) They pursued the Romans all the way as far as Antipatris but failed to catch them; so, turning back, they carried off the machines and despoiled the dead, collected the booty which had been left on the route and, with hymns of triumph, marched back to the capital. (555) Their own

casualties were negligible, but the Romans and their allies had lost five thousand three hundred infantry and four hundred and eighty of the cavalry. This action was fought on the eighth of the month of Dius in the twelfth year [*c*] of Nero's principate.

Chapter XX

1. The departure of prominent Jews from Jerusalem; Cestius' report to the emperor

(556) After the disastrous defeat of Cestius, many prominent Jews abandoned the City like swimmers, a sinking ship. Thus the brothers Costobar and Saul [*a*] with Philip [*a*], son of Jacimus, commander of King Agrippa's army, fled from Jerusalem and joined Cestius. (557) But Antipas, their companion in the siege of the royal palace, declined to flee and was put to death by the insurgents as we shall describe later [*b*]. (558) Cestius sent Saul and friends, at their request, to Nero in Achaia [*c*] to inform him of their own plight and to lay the blame for the war on Florus; Nero's anger against Florus would, he hoped, lessen the danger to himself [*d*].

2. Jews massacred in Damascus

(559) At this time the people of Damascus, learning of the disaster that had befallen the Romans, were eager to eliminate the Jews in their midst [*a*]. (560) As they had them cooped up in the gymnasium for a long time—taking this precaution as a result of suspicion—they considered that the execution of their task would present no difficulty whatever. Their only fear was of their own wives [*b*], who had almost all gone over to the Jewish religion, (561) so that their anxiety was directed to keep the secret from them. In the end, they fell upon the Jews, closeted together and unarmed, and they slaughtered them all, numbering ten thousand five hundred within one hour, with impunity.

3. The Jews' selection of their generals to conduct the war

(562) The Jews who had pursued Cestius returned to Jerusalem and partly by force, partly by persuasion, they won over such pro-Romans as still remained [*a*]. Gathering in the Temple they appointed additional generals to conduct the war. (563) Joseph son of Gorion [*b*] and the high priest Ananus [*c*] were elected to the supreme control of affairs within the city, with special responsibility to raise the height of the walls. (564) As for Eleazar, son of Simon [*d*], though he had in his possession the Roman spoils, the money taken from Cestius, and a great part of the public treasure, they did not entrust him with office as they observed that he had a despotic nature, and that his devoted followers were behaving like an armed bodyguard. (565) Gradually, however, financial needs and Eleazar's

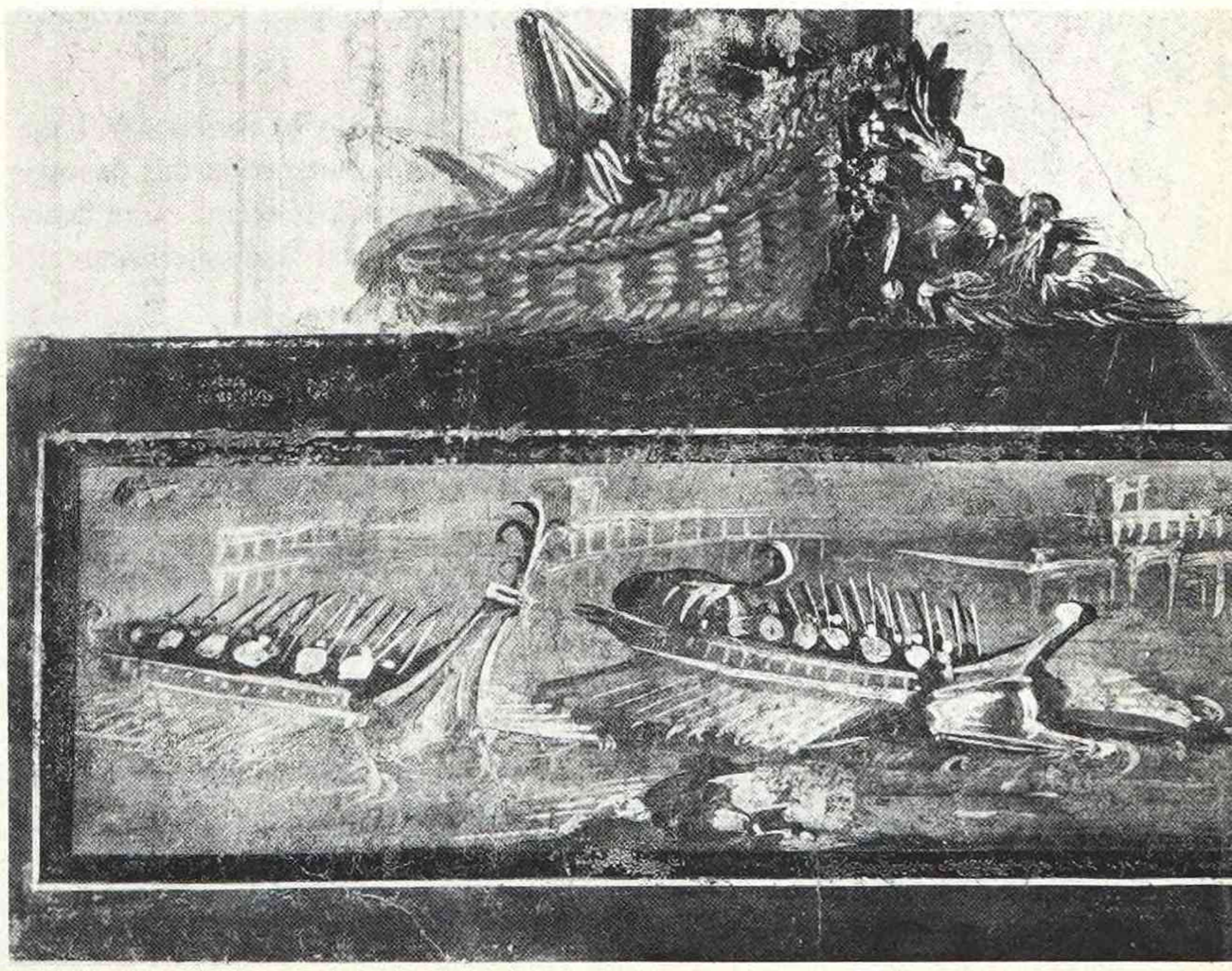
562[*a*] *The Jews close ranks to fight Rome* Cestius' failure transformed the revolt against Rome into a real war. A success so unexpected and sensational had naturally strengthened the hands of the war-party. The majority of the opponents to the revolt found themselves in a minority and tended to ally themselves with the winning Zealots, even though they did not believe that victory was possible. Nevertheless, although they did not proclaim themselves openly, they thought it more advisable to give the appearance of approval for fear of losing control over the people as a whole. Thus, the high-priestly circles and moderates, although notorious in their allegiance to the side of peace, decided to assume the direction of the war which was now considered inevitable; moreover, they alone—so they thought—were capable of eventually finding a propitious moment to achieve a peaceful arrangement with the Romans. This does not imply that the Pharisees or Sadducees had abandoned their doctrinal views and endorsed messianic zealotry, only that the old antagonisms were muted in the face of the mortal danger that faced Jerusalem and the whole community, as they had found out, through their recent experience.

563[*b*] The respite gained by the Jews after Cestius' retreat to Syria was exploited to organize a national defense force. Whence the appointment of the formal heads: first Joseph ben Gorion, appointed head of the government in Jerusalem; he was apparently descended from a respected family and probably identical with the Zealot leader named in *War* IV 159. Other leaders were Ananus and Eleazar.

563[*c*] *Ananus,* son of Ananus, was a Sadducee and former high priest and brother of Jonathan who had been killed by the Sicarii (*War* II, 256). He was a distinguished orator, loved by the masses but distrusted by the Zealots; he was regarded as the head of the new government. He had formerly been appointed to the high priesthood by King Agrippa II but deposed after three months because of his summary condemnation of his opponents, among whom was James, the brother of Jesus of Nazareth (*Antiq.* XX, 197). His description in harsh colors (as in other sources) does not accord with the present one in *War* II, where he appears as the leader of the moderates, a counterweight to the Zealots in the new coalition; when he was eventually murdered by the mob, he received a eulogy worthy of the very great.

564[*d*]–565[*e*] *Eleazar son of Simon* was also a scion of a priestly family. As he held the military booty taken at Beth-Horon, he virtually held the reins of government and behaved accordingly, as described by the text.

The "sinking ship" metaphor calls to mind a ship scene in the House of the Vetti at Pompeii



intrigues had such influence with the people that they ended by yielding to him the supreme command [*e*].

4. (566) Other generals were selected for Idumaea, namely Jesus son of Sapphas [*a*], one of the chief priests, and Eleazar, son of the high priest Ananias [*b*]; the then governor of Idumaea, Niger [*c*], also called the Peraean because he was a native of Peraea east of Jordan, was instructed to act under the order of these officers. (567) Nor did they overlook the rest of the country; Joseph, son of Simon, was sent to take command at Jericho, Manasseh to Peraea, John the Essene [*a*] to the province of Thamna [*b*], with Lyd da, Joppa and Emmaus also under his charge. (568) John, son of Ananias, was appointed commanding officer of the provinces of Gophna and Acrabatha [*b*]; Josephus, son of Matthias, was given the two Galilees [*c*], with the addition of Gamla [*c*], the strongest city in the region.

5. Josephus' organization of the defense of Galilee

(569) Each of the generals executed his commission with all the zeal and ability he possessed. Josephus, on his arrival in Galilee, gave first priority to secure the goodwill of the inhabitants, knowing that this would serve him in very good stead even if he would fail in other respects. (570) He realized that he could conciliate the leaders by associating them with him in his authority and the people in general if he issued orders primarily through the medium of their local representatives. He therefore selected from the people seventy of the most sensible persons [*a*] of mature years and put them in charge of the whole of Galilee; (571) and seven magistrates [*b*] in every city to judge petty disputes, ordering that major disputes and capital cases be referred to himself and the seventy [*c*].

6. His fortification of the towns

(572) When he had established these rules for the internal regulation of the various towns, he turned his attention to their safety from external attack. (573) Realizing that the Romans would assault Galilee first, he fortified the most defensible positions, namely, Jotapata [*a*], Bersabe, Selame, Capharecchо, Japha, Sigopha [*a*], the mountain called Itabyrion, Tarichaeae, and Tiberias; he further provided with walls the caves [*b*] in Lower Galilee near the Lake of Gennesareth, and in Upper Galilee the rock known as the rock of Akchabaron, Sephat, Yamnit and Mero [*a*]. (574) In Gaulanitis he fortified Seleucia, Soganaea and Gamala [*a*]. Only in Sepphoris [*b*] were the citizens allowed to build walls on their own account, because he saw that they had ample means and that they were eager for war even without orders. (575) Similarly, John, son of Levi, fortified Gischala at his own expense on the instruction of Josephus [*c*]. The building of all other strongholds was personally supervised by Josephus, who directed the operations and lent a hand himself. (576) He also raised in Galilee a

566[*a*]–566[*b*] *The other generals* Palestine was divided into various military zones and the government of Jerusalem wanted to establish a military command recruited from leaders of priestly stock—also a hardy lot—though not officiating priests. Three commanders were delegated to *Idumaea,* the southern part of Judaea (whose main towns included Maresha, Adoraim, Beth-Govrin, Hebron, Bethzur): *Jeshua,* son of Sapphas, *Eleazar,* son of the high priest Ananias, a high ranking priest at the Temple, whose challenge to Rome was responsible for the war (*War* II, 409).

566[*c*] *Niger,* a Peraean, was the third commander; he had distinguished himself in the war against Cestius (*War* II, 520).

567[*a*] John the Essene's district stretched from Thamna, northwest of Jerusalem, to the Mediterranean (including Lod, Emmaus, Joppa, probably Yabneh and Ashdod in the coastal plain). John is mentioned again in *War* III, 11, 19.

568[*b*] His province lay east of the above: Acrabatha (modern Akraba) was the border between Judaea and Samaria, and the district included Gophna, once the hideout of the early Maccabeans.

568[*c*] *Josephus in command of Galilee* The most important command over Galilee and the district of *Gamla* (in the Gaulan heights, east of Galilee), the area most exposed to Roman attack, was entrusted to Josephus, the future historian and author of this book, a thirty-year-old priest who had no previous military experience. For a description of *Gamla* see *War* IV, 11–83.) and its siege by Vespasian (*War* IV, 11–53, 62–83). Recently *Gamla* has been discovered and duly excavated, as illustrated below. With due deference to this great, classic historian, many have regarded Josephus' appointment to Galilee as an indication of the lukewarm spirit in which the new government in Jerusalem undertook this war. The dispatch of Josephus, a philo-Roman general, to Galilee, even though inexperienced in war, seems to show that the provisional government in Jerusalem had no desire for a war with Rome, and was, to all appearances, maneuvering to find the best means of concluding the honorable compromise; but in the revolutionary turmoil into which Galilee was plunged such a policy could never succeed. This is clearly shown by events in Galilee, the only region about which Josephus gives us detailed information. However, there is a definite change in the character and stance of the narrative when the historian turns to his personal history and becomes somewhat more subjective, forgetting at times the disciplined objectivity of a historian. The reason is explained in the footnote, 614 [*a*]. Though this could lead to confusion and contradiction at times (as shown above by a comparison of the present text and that of *Life*), it represents roughly the complexity of the situation, which may have been matched in the rest of Judaea. The rivalries of the different classes, of the aggressive individual Zealots and their followers; of different cities and their attitudes, alternatively unfavorable and favorable towards King Agrippa II (to whom a part of Galilee belonged along with pagan districts further north), meant that neither anti-Romans nor philo-Romans could agree among themselves. Furthermore, it is evident that on his arrival in Galilee Josephus was soon drawn into the maelstrom.

570[*a*] *The seventy administrators* This is slightly at variance with the corresponding *Life,* 79, as well as the opening sentence in this passage (i.e. conciliation of the native leaders in the area). It seems more likely that the seventy administrators were existing local leading citizens appointed by Josephus.

571[*b*] *The smaller Sanhedrins* The Great Sanhedrin, during the rule of the procurators, was a national institution, composed of Pharisaic scholars and headed by their leader, the *Nasi.* During that period, a council consisting of the acting and former high priests—all of them owing their appointment to the procurator headed the political Sanhedrin of the country. While the Great Sanhedrin was a national institution, there were small Sanhedrins consisting of twenty-three members in the capital cities of each region; they constituted in effect the city councils. The villages came under the jurisdiction of the cities and according to Josephus, were governed by seven appointed leaders.

571[*c*] In addition to these, Josephus does not mention the two levitical officials; these are referred to in Talmudic literature (Deuteromony, chaps. 16, 17).

573[*a*] *Josephus consolidates his positions* The detailed list of fortified places is illustrated in our map with their identifiable Hebrew names.

force of over a hundred thousand young men, equipping them all with old weapons that he got together for the purpose [*d*].

7. His training of his army along Roman lines

(577) Josephus realized that the invincible strength of Rome was chiefly due to obedience and military training; he despaired of providing similar instruction [*a*], which could only be acquired by longtime familiarity. However, he did observe that their discipline was due to the number of their officers and, therefore, he divided the army along Roman lines, and appointed more company commanders. (578) He instituted different ranks of soldiers and set over them decurions [*b*] and centurions [*b*], above whom were tribunes, and over these generals in command of more extensive divisions. (579) He taught them [*c*] how to pass on signals, how to sound the advance and retreat, how to make flank attacks and encircling maneuvers, and how a victorious unit could relieve one in difficulties and assist any who were hard-pressed. (580) He explained all that contributed to fortitude of spirit and toughness of the body, but above all he trained them for war [*a*] by expounding Roman discipline at every turn; and how they would be fighting men who by physical prowess and determination had become masters of well-nigh the whole world [*d*]. (581) He told them that he would test their military discipline even before they went into action, by noting whether they refrained from their obsessive sins of theft, banditry and looting, and from defrauding their countrymen, and from regarding as personal gain the misfortunes of their closest friends. (582) For, he added, war goes best for men who have a clear conscience, while those whose private lives were depraved had not only enemies, but God to contend with.

8. (583) To this effect he exhorted them continually. The army he had mustered and readied for battle numbered sixty thousand foot soldiers [*e*] and three hundred and fifty cavalry, besides some four thousand five hundred mercenaries, in whom he placed most confidence. He had also six hundred picked men as his personal bodyguard. (584) Maintenance for all this army, except the mercenaries, was easily provided by the towns: each town sent out on service only one half of its levy and retained the remainder to provide them with supplies. Thus one party was detailed for combat duty, the other for fatigue duties, and those who provided the food were repaid by the combatants with security.

They were mostly observation and signalling posts along the main roads, or safe retreats in Galilee, as follows: Yafia, Dabrat, Mt. Tabor, Agrippina, in the south; Afrata, Jotapata, Sachnei, Zalamin, Beersheba in the west; Meron (called Merot in the text), Zefat (Safed), Achbrei, Yamnit in Upper Galilee; and, in addition, Tarichaeae (Migdal) and Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee (Gennesareth) a place whose inhabitants Josephus disliked, as a result of which he became involved in disputes with them. The ancient remains of Meron, 9 kms from Safed, have been excavated (Khirbet Shema) and the imposing façade of its 2nd century AD synagogue adjoins the tombs of mystic rabbis burial there. By late medieval times Meron became a great pilgrimage center, its sanctity deriving from the mystical traditions of Rabbi Shimeon bar Yochai, the lurian Kabbalist, whence the popular festival of Lag-Baomer celebrated there by vast masses of modern pilgrims.

573[*b*] The caves were those of Arbel, west of the Sea of Galilee (*War* I, 304–310).

574[*a*] *Gamala* The annexation of this important town in Gaulanitis and the fortification of Seleukia and Sognei strengthened his strategic position, as Gamala was presumed to maintain communications with the Hauran (Auranitis), the desert and even distant Babylonia (568[*c*]).

574[*b*] *Sepphoris* This allegation fails to reflect the true position (as stated in *Life*, 30) which represents Sepphoris as the main city in Galilee, and pro-Roman. It was rather this fact that really weakened and eventually wrecked Josephus' defense plans (cf. 511[*a*] above.)

575[*c*] An improbable statement, as John probably built the wall to defend himself against Josephus (*Life*, 45, 189).

576[*d*] A highly exaggerated estimate, as most historians agree.

577[*a*] Most Josephus students detect here a measure of complacency, for he had no military experience and had little time—as well as having no training—to cope constructively with such instruction among his other trying problems and confiicts.

578[*b*] These were commanders of 10 and 100 troops. *Tribunes* in the Roman hierarchy were any of ten officers elected to protect the interests of the plebians from the particians. Josephus may have referred to commanders of 1000.

579[*c*] Compare 577[*a*], 580.

580[*d*] It will be noted that Josephus stresses here a qualification he placed in the mouth of King Agrippa II in the course of his famous pacifist speech to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (*War* II, 345–401).

583[*e*] This figure stands in contrast with par. 576. Presumably, the rest of the men were potential recruits, not yet ready fighting material. Josephus' figures were relative in any case; when war raged it is not likely that these men responded readily to his call.

This coin, minted by Vespasian in Caesarea, identifies Neronias *with Sepphoris*

585[*a*] *Gischala* is Gush-Halab in Hebrew; see map. Today it is an Arab village, El-Jish, mostly populated by Maronite Christians.
586[*b*]–588[*c*] *The portrait of John of Gischala,* as outlined here, is far more hostile than in the corresponding *Life,* 43, 70 f. where John is described as a calm and peaceful citizen who shunned rebellion; but, after his city, Gischala, was burnt and pillaged, he coopted a large band to avenge the wrongs done to it and rebuilt its walls. The reason for the author's antagonism may be found in the timing of Josephus' historical writing: The *War* was written after the disaster when John was still a prisoner of the Romans, hence a potential danger to himself, whereas *life* was written in AD 76 after John's death, when he could speak more generously of his old enemy. Further light on John of Gischala is thrown in *War* IV, 558 when he and his Galilean contingent acquired particular notoriety in the siege of Jerusalem for mischief, ingenuity and audacity; by that time the expression "Galilean" ceased merely to be a geographic connotation but took on the political suggestion of a possible association with Judas the Galilean, founder of the Zealots. Even in the *Mishna, Yadaim* 4, 8, a "Galilean heretic" is an extreme nationalist who rebukes the Pharisees for including the name of the emperor in the dating of a Jewish legal document, a bill of divorce.
590[*a*] In *Life,* 70–77 Josephus relates that his colleagues gave John permission to sell the imperial grain stored by the Romans, and allocated the proceeds for the repairing of the walls of Gischala.
591[*b*] Non-Jewish oil was prohibited long before then, i.e. in the period of the Hasmoneans (and it had then spread also to the Jews of the Diaspora); the books of Daniel and the apocryphal Tobit admonish Jews not to eat Gentile food. Judith, too, did not take a portion of Holofernes' food and she lived on the oil that she brought from her home (*Apocrypha,* Judith X, 5; XII, 1–4).
592[*c*] *Amphorae, the story of the foreign oil and the rivalry with John* We learn from Josephus (*Life,* 74) that John sold oil to the Jews of Caesarea Philippi, Agrippa's capital, where they were confined by order and that he also passed it on to the Jews of Syria. In *Antiq.* XII, Chapter 3 he relates that he gave people (who did not want to use the foreign produce) oil from the public stores to use in their baths. On the other hand, it is interesting to note in *Life,* 75 that John is presumed not only to have made a tremendous profit on oil he bought in Caesarea and sold to Syria but also that during the years of revolt, John was granted a

Oil or wine amphorae *and a merchant in his storeroom*

Chapter XXI

1. Plots and raids of John of Gischala—his character

(585) While Josephus was busy organizing affairs in Galilee, there appeared on the scene a plotter, a man from Gischala [*a*] named John, son of Levi, the most unscrupulous and crafty of all who ever gained notoriety by devious tricks. He began as a poor man and for a long time his propensities were held in check by poverty; (586) but being a ready liar and clever at winning the trust of his victims, he made a virtue of deceit and practiced it on his closest friends [*b*]. (587) While parading humanity, the prospect of gain made him the most bloodthirsty of men; he was always full of high ambitions, but his hopes were nourished on the basest deceits. He started as a solitary bandit but later found accomplices for his daring deeds, a handful at first but more and more as he grew more successful. (588) He was careful not to take into partnership anyone easily subdued by an assailant, and chose solid strapping men, with stout hearts and military experience. He managed to muster a band of four hundred men, for the most part outlaws from Tyre and the neighboring villages [*c*]. (589) With their help he plundered all Galilee and harried the masses, distracted as they were by the impending war.

2. John's hatred of Josephus

(590) He was already aspiring to the command and had even higher ambitions, but shortage of money kept him down. When he saw that Josephus was delighted with his energy, he first induced him to entrust him with the rebuilding of the walls of his home town, an undertaking in which he made a large profit at the expense of the wealthy citizens [*a*]. (591) Next he contrived a remarkable piece of roguery: pretending that he wished to save all the Jews in Syria from using oil not supplied by fellow Jews [*b*], he sought permission to deliver it to them at the frontier. (592) Then he cornered available supplies, paying Tyrian currency worth four attic drachmas for four amphora [*c*] and proceeded to sell half an amphorae at the same price. As Galilee has a great production of olives and the harvest had been plentiful, John, by being the only supplier of great quantities to districts in want of it, amassed untold wealth, which he immediately employed against the man who had put this commerce in his hands [*c*]. (593) Supposing that, if he could get rid of Josephus, he would himself become governor of Galilee, he ordered his gangs to push their raids more vigorously than ever. In the resulting general turmoil throughout the country, either the governor would go to the rescue, in which case he would somehow ambush and finish him off; or, if Josephus neglected to take measures against the brigands, he would slander him to his countrymen. (594) Finally, he had long since spread a report that Josephus intended to betray the country to the

Romans and devised many similar expedients to ruin his chief.

3. The goods stolen from Agrippa at Dabarittha

(595) At this time some young men from the village of Dabarittha [*a*], members of the guards stationed in the great plain [*a*], waylaid Ptolemy, the overseer of Agrippa and Bernice, and robbed him of all his baggage, which included a large quantity of rich vestments, a number of silver goblets and six hundred pieces of gold [*b*]. (596) Unable to dispose of the loot secretly, they brought the whole lot to Josephus at Tarichaeae [*c*]. (597) He censured their violence to the king's servants, and committed the goods to the charge of Annaeus [*d*], the chief citizen of Tarichaeae, intending to take the first opportunity to return them to their owners when a favorable opportunity presented itself. This put him in the greatest danger. (598) For the plunderers, indignant at receiving no portion of the spoil, and realizing that Josephus meant to present the king and the queen [*e*] with the fruits of their labors, hurried off to the villages by night and everywhere denounced Josephus as a traitor; they further incited the neighboring cities, so that when day broke a hundred thousand armed men had gathered against him.

Josephus' confrontation of the mob at Tarichaeae

(599) The mob crowded the hippodrome [*a*] at Tarichaeae and made loud and angry demonstrations; some clamored for the stoning of the traitor, others to burn him alive; the mob was instigated by John, backed by Jesus, son of Sapphias, then chief magistrate of Tiberias. (600) The friends and bodyguards of Josephus, terrified at the attack of the crowd, all fled with the exception of four men; he himself was asleep and did not wake till the house was on the point of being set on fire. (601) His four faithful companions urged him to flee; but he, undaunted by the general desertion or by the number of the attackers, rushed out,' his clothes rent and his head sprinkled with ashes, his hands behind his back and his sword dangling from his neck. (602) At the spectacle, his familiar friends, especially the Tarichaeans, were moved to compassion, but the country people and those from the neighborhood who considered him a nuisance, railed at him and insisted that he should produce the public money and admit his compact to betray them. (603) For they had gathered from his appearance that he would not deny any of the things they suspected, and that in order to obtain their pardon he made all this pitiable exhibition of himself. (604) But the real purpose of this self-abasement was merely part of a stratagem; with the design of inducing dissension among his indignant critics, he promised to give a full explanation of the actions that had angered them, and on being given leave to speak he thus addressed them: (605) "I had no intention of

monopoly on selling oil from Galilee to Caesarea Philippi. In summary, according to some scholars such as J. Klausner, M. Avi-Yonah and others who regarded the Zealots more sympathy, John was a landowner engaged in the production of olive oil (see illustration of an olive press, amphoras, etc.) After the destruction of Gischala by the Helleno-Syrians, he conducted retaliatory raids at the head of villagers who had returned to refortify the town. After Josephus arrived in Galilee in AD 66, severe friction broke out between him and John, further detailed in the sequel. It appears that, to defend himself against the Zealot revolutionaries, affiliated with John of Gischala, Josephus had to stoop to an alliance with gangs of so-called "bandits" whom he took in his pay, but upon whose loyalty he could not absolutely rely. These "bandits" may have been Zealots who had found that John of Gischala, rich oil merchant that he was (as appears incidentally from Josephus' own remark in *Life,* 43), could not at this particular time execute their whole program.

595[*a*] *Dabarittha* present Dabburiyeh, a village under the western slope of Mt. Tabor. The great plain is that of Jezreel (Esdraelon). A similar story appears in Josephus' *Life,* 126–129. Josephus tried to maintain friendly relations with King Agrippa II, who was titular head of Tarichaea and Tiberias in eastern Galilee given to him by Nero (*Antiq.* XX, 1959) while the Jews of the district were rebelling against Agrippa and were still uncertain of their attitude to the newcomer, Josephus. Thus he was beset by difficulties from the start.

595[*b*] Unspecified coins.

596[*c*] *Tarichaeae,* known as Migdal Nunaya (drying and salting of fish) also Magdala and present-day Migdal on the Sea of Galilee; described in *War* I, 180. Excavations conducted by Fr. S. Loffreda and V. Corbo in 1971–1975 have uncovered the remains of protective walls, towers, paved streets, mikvehs (purification baths), and a synagogue dating from the 3rd century AD.

597[*d*] According to *Life,* 131 they were committed to Dassion and Jannaeus, friends of Agrippa.

598[*e*] King Agrippa and Queen Bernice.

599[*a*] The existence of a hippodrome attests to the comparative wealth and importance of the town, and indicates also the impact of Hellenistic culture in the area.

Night fishing on the Sea of Galilee facing Tarichaeae and Tiberias, famed for their fisheries (see 608[a])

either returning this money to Agrippa or appropriating it myself; far be it from me ever to consider your enemy as my friend or the community's loss as personal gain. (606) But I saw, citizens of Tarichaeae, that your city especially stood in need of defenses [*b*] and that it could not build ramparts for lack of funds; as, moreover, I feared that the people of Tiberias and other cities had their eyes on these spoils, I decided quietly to keep the money in order to build a wall around your city. (607) If you do not approve, I will produce what was brought to me and give it to you to plunder; if, on the contrary, I have acted in your best interests, do not punish your benefactor."

4. The people of Tarichaeae won over by his ruse

(608) On hearing this, the people of Tarichaeae expressed approval, but the people of Tiberias and elsewhere [*a*] yelled abuse and threats; then the two parties left Josephus alone and fell to quarreling with each other. He, confident of his new supporters—the Tarichaeans numbered as many as forty thousand—proceeded to address the whole throng in bolder terms. (609) He condemned their rashness and then declared that with the money in hand he would fortify Tarichaeae and provide equal security for the other cities as well. There would be no lack of money if they would unite in deciding who was the enemy against whom they should expend the founds, instead of attacking the man who provided them.

5. Another attempt on Josephus' life; his stratagem

(610) At this the bulk of the deluded crowd withdrew, though still angry; but two thousand armed men rushed at him [*c*]; he was too quick for them and got back into his house in time which they besieged with menacing cries. Josephus now resorted to a second trick. (611) He went up on the roof, quelled their cries with a gesture and declared that he had no idea what they wanted, as their confused shouts prevented him from hearing them; but he would do whatever they demanded if they sent in a deputation to confer quietly with him. (612) On hearing this, the leaders of the party and the magistrates came in [*d*]. Josephus then dragged them into the most secluded portion of his house, shut the outer door, and had them flogged till he had exposed their entrails. Meanwhile, the mob waited outside, thinking that the delegates were engaged in a prolonged parley. (613) But Josephus suddenly flung open the doors and pushed the men out covered with blood, striking such terror into the threatening crowd that they dropped their arms and fled.

6. John of Gischala's promotion of a deadly opposition at Tiberias

(614) These developments intensified John's envy [*a*] and he devised a second plot against Josephus. Feigning sickness, he wrote to Josephus begging his permis-

606[*b*] When Josephus organized the defenses of Galilee, Tarichaeae with approximately 40,000 inhabitants was protected by walls on three sides; the only exposed area was the part that faced the lake. This would explain the people's concern in these troublesome days; but this may have been remedied by Josephus.

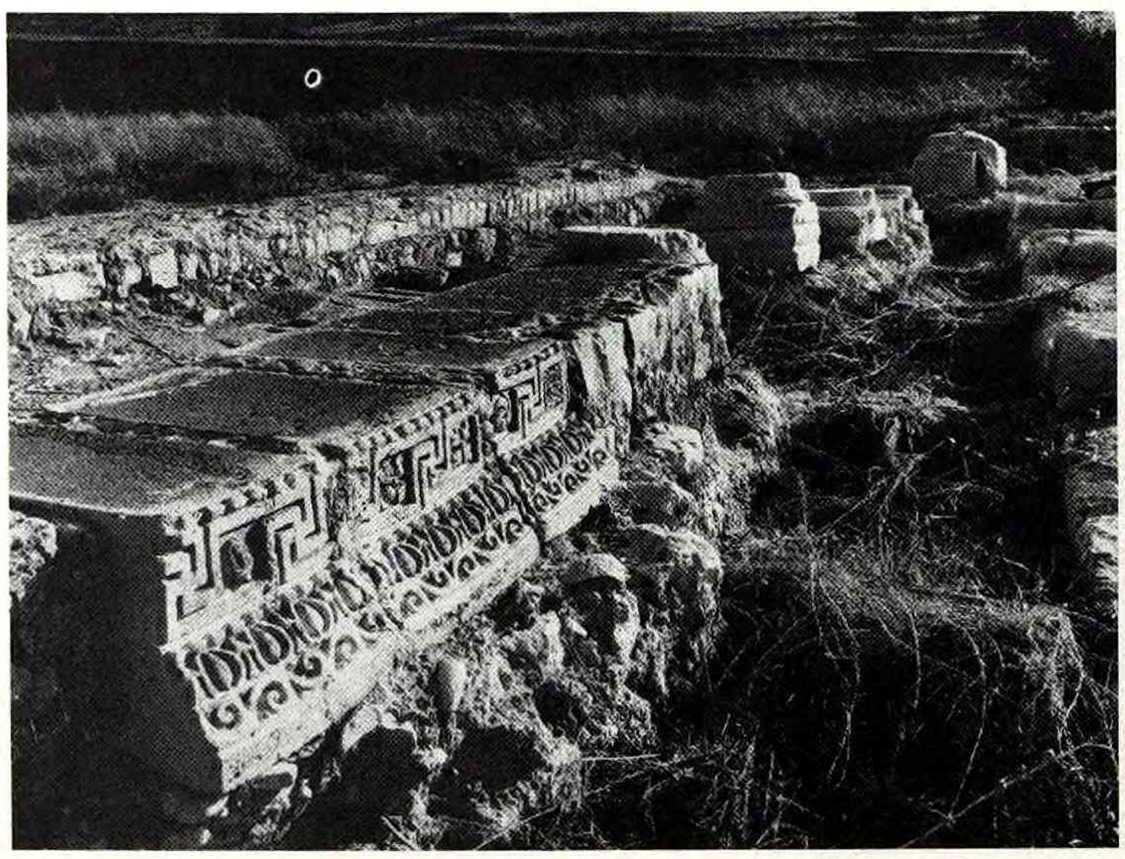
608[*a*] Josephus found his chief support in the moderate elements (which were scattered about the country) and were strong in Tarichaeae, (Migdal Nunia), the prosperous fishing and boat-transport town that had revolted against Agrippa. It was noted from previous text and comments that the First Revolt had put him in an extremely difficult position. As a client king of Rome, ruling from Caesarea-Philippi, which he renamed Neronias in honor of the emperor (*Antiq.* XX, 211), he and his sister Bernice had tried their best to calm the people of Jerusalem, but all his efforts, including the despatch of troops to the city had been in vain. He then sent forces to help Cestius Gallus recapture Jerusalem from the rebels. The rebels' victories over Gallus hastened the revolt of Agrippa's Jewish subjects on the western side of the Lake of Galilee (Tiberias and Tarichaeae). Not only were they in a state of insurrection, but also Gaulanitis (the Gaulan heights) led by the fortress of Gamala. Agrippa never managed to crush the revolt with his own forces. The sequel is related in *War* III, 462; IV, 2–4, 8.

610[*c*] They were 600 according to *Life,* 145. Both figures seem exaggerated.

612[*d*] In the version of *Life,* 147 only one delegate was brought in and, after being whipped, had one hand severed and suspended from his neck.

614[*a*] *The crisis in Tiberias* In the corresponding narrative of *Life,* 84–103, the incidents in Tiberias (related here in paragraphs 614–623) are placed before the serious clash at Tarichaeae (as in 595–613). John's envy is qualified by popularity. This may possibly be explained by the fact that Tiberias, which had broken away from pro-Roman Agrippa, was one of the cities in which John, Gischala had the largest following,

Synagogue of Tarichaeae (second to fourth centuries AD)



sion to take the hot baths at Tiberias [*b*] to seek a cure. (615) Josephus, not yet suspecting a plot, wrote to his lieutenants in the city to accommodate John and provide for his needs. After making himself comfortable for two days, he proceeded to carry out the object of his visit; by deception or bribery, he attempted to corrupt the citizens to revolt against Josephus. (616) Hearing of this, Silas, whom Josephus had appointed guardian of the city, hastened to inform his chief of the conspiracy [*c*]. Josephus, on receipt of his letter, set off on a swift night march that brought him at dawn to Tiberias. (617) The whole population came out to meet him except John; he had little doubt that this visit boded ill for himself, so he sent one of his acquaintances with a message that he was unwell and confined to bed, and so could not pay his respects [*d*]. (618) But when Josephus had assembled the citizens of Tiberias in the stadium and was trying to tell them about the report he had received, John quietly sent armed men with orders to kill him. (619) When the people saw these men drawing their swords, they raised a shout; at their sound Josephus swung round and seeing the bare steel actually at his throat, jumped down to the beach—while addressing the people, he had been standing on a mound six cubits high [*a*]—and leaping with two of his guards into a boat moored nearby, escaped to the middle of the lake.

7. John's men scattered by Josephus

(620) His soldiers instantly seized their weapons and charged the conspirators. Then Josephus, fearing that civil war would break out and bring ruin upon the city [*b*], sent a message to his men that they were only to provide for their own safety, and neither kill anybody nor bring the guilty to trial [*b*]. (621) In accordance with these orders, the soldiers refrained from action; but the inhabitants of the district, on learning of the plot and of the person responsible, mustered in force to attack John, who made his escape to Gischala, his native place. (622) The Galileans from one town after another streamed to the support of Josephus till myriads of men in arms protested that they had come to punish John, the public enemy, and that they would burn him alive with the city that harbored him. (623) Josephus expressed his appreciation of their goodwill, but restrained their fury, choosing to outwit his enemies rather than kill them. (624) Instead, he obtained the names of those in every city who had joined in John's revolt, since their fellow citizens were delighted to give the information, and then issued a public proclamation that anyone who had not deserted John within five days [*a*] would have his property seized and his home burnt to the ground along with his family. (625) The immediate result was the desertion of three thousand of his followers who came to Josephus and threw down their arms at his feet; with the rest, about two thousand Syrian [*b*] fugitives, John, abandoning open hostilities, was

and his influence was limited only by an active pro-Roman minority. Furthermore, we learn from other sources that there was yet another party in the city, a more moderate one headed by the scholarly Justus, son of Pistus. However, Josephus could not avail himself of it owing to his personal enmity with its head. This rivalry was to develop into a literary rivalry as well, for in later years Justus published his own history of the war shortly after the death of Agrippa (AD 100). This account contradicted Josephus' originally published in *Life,* 92–94, on many points and induced Josephus to publish a second edition after that time. Though he admitted that Justus' information was trustworthy, at least regarding events in Judaea, Josephus, in attacking Justus, had to drop his pose as an experienced general (which he had assumed in *Wars* in descriptions of the complex situation in Galilee) and thereby give an account that agreed more with the situation in which he found himself engulfed—a real maelstrom. This he faced with great courage, regarding the latter as the true qualities of a general. This lends support to the opinion of some modern scholars that the corresponding account in *Life* has preserved the true sequence of events.

614[*a*] The excavation of Tiberias (under G. Foerster) have uncovered the Roman city gate built after AD 70. This gate was later covered by Muuslim structures.

614[*b*] Tiberias' baths are famed in Talmudic literature and imposing remains of both have been uncovered in recent years.

616[*c*] Josephus was then at Cana (*Life,* 86).

617[*d*] In *Life,* 91 John came in person to meet Josephus, but retired awkwardly.

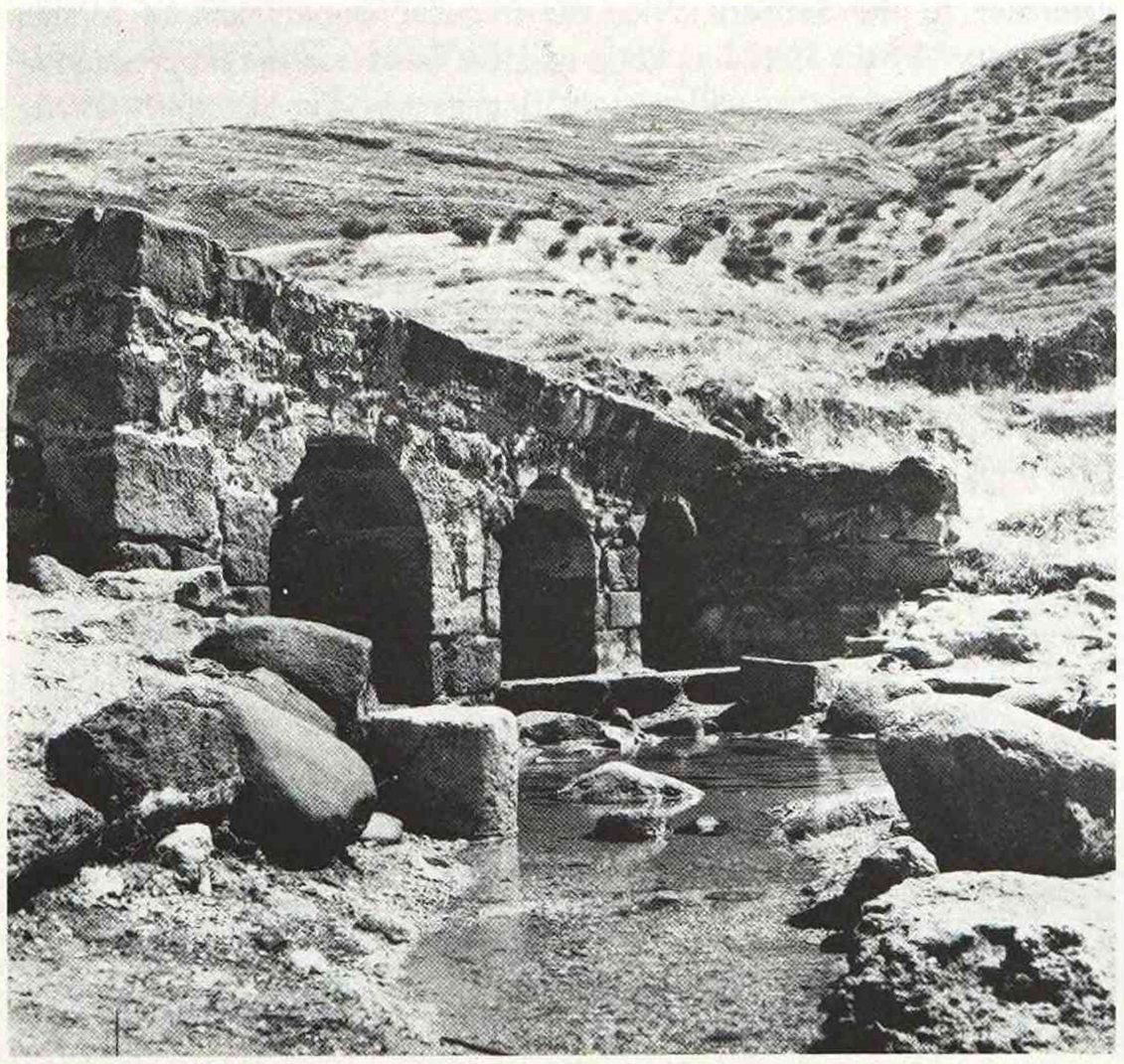
619[*a*] Equivalent to 3 m. (9 ft.). In *Life,* 96, the two escorts were his bodyguard and Herod, a citizen of Tiberias.

620[*b*] These two statements have no parallel in *Life.*

624[*a*] After twenty days (*Life,* 370).

625[*b*] They were Tyrians (*Life,* 372; compare 588). These developments are placed, with good reason, much later in the corresponding fuller narrative, i.e., after the conflict with the deputation from Jerusalem (*Life,* 368–372; and compare 627).

Ruins of the ancient hot baths of Tiberias (see 614)



627[*a*] *John's attempt to supplant Josephus* This is narrated at great length in *Life,* 189–372. John determined at all costs to have Josephus removed. He despatched his brother Simon and Jonathan, son of Sisenna (with a large armed band) to Jerusalem, to Simon, son of Gamaliel, a boyhood friend of Jonathan and an illustrious teacher and leader of the community. He further entreated him to induce the National Assembly (the new government) to supplant Josephus and to vote for him as his substitute; also, through him, to bring pressure on the high priests Ananus and Jeshua to clip Josephus' wings. Ananus turned him down but later agreed. A deputation was sent to Galilee but Josephus claims that he dismissed them scornfully.

630[*b*] He was quite able to maintain his own position by making use of his friends in a clever way against the four newcomers from Jerusalem. In any case he did not recapture Gischala.

634[*a*] *He quells the revolt in Tiberias* He wanted to spare the people of Tarichaeae any unpleasantness from the presence of the military.

635[*b*] *Tarichaeae* (Migdal-Nunia) had 230 boats of four oars which served as cargo boats to transfer people and goods across the Sea of Galilee, as well as for fishing.

638[*a*] Compare 606.

647[*a*] *Josephus' defense measures in Galilee before the Roman attack* The disturbances in Galilee were not completely quelled, and the fact that Sepphoris, the main city in Galilee, was ready to submit to Rome thus weakened Josephus' position and counteracted his defense measures. The story of Sepphoris and Josephus is interrupted at this point and is pursued in *War* III, 29–34; 59–69. "In the winter of 66/67 Josephus moved his headquarters as circumstances required, and he visited most sections of Galilee to negotiate or to oppose his foes. He spent a good deal of his time at Kabul near Acre, in the Beth-Natufa valley or at Yafia or Simonia on the southern border of Galilee. The coming spring of AD 67 proved the crucial test of the merit of the defense plan he had organized in Galilee." (M. Avi Yonah, *Carta's Atlas of the period of the Second Temple,* p. 70.)

647[*b*] *Jerusalem's attitude to the war* On the ordinary military level, a war with Rome seemed senseless, but a powerful surge of messianism and nationalist resistance had gripped the country. "It must not be supposed that the revolt was incited by religious fanaticism. In its main effort to win freedom, it did not entirely ignore political realities. Superficially, the forces engaged would seem so unequal that little Palestine must be foredoomed. The fact is, however, that the fanatical leaders of the revolt could invoke certain factors favorable to their cause. The great mixture of Jews throughout the eastern Mediterranean constituted a power which, if properly managed, could perhaps venture to defy the most formidable military nation of history. Even such enemies as Tacitus admitted that the Jews were, as a rule, "healthy and capable of hard work." They had been much sought after as soldiers for centuries. Neither the exemption from military service granted them out of deference to the Sabbath... nor the frequent employment of foreign mercenaries by the Herodian kings as more reliable in the suppression of domestic disturbances, sufficed to extinguish the war-like spirit among the Jewish youth.., But with the growing religious fanaticism accompanying the wars with the Romans, the greater zeal and devotion of the Jewish warriors partly made up for the shortcomings of their military training and equipment." (S. W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews,* p. 90–91, 1952).

648[*c*] The repairs included the uncompleted Third Wall started by Agrippa I (described in *War* V, 147–155) and completed hastily by the Zealots in the years of the Great Revolt.

driven back to clandestine plots [*b*]. (626) Therefore he sent secret messengers to Jerusalem to denounce Josephus as growing too powerful, and to say that he might at any moment come and set himself up as tyrant in the capital, if he were not forestalled first.

His defeat of John's attempt to supplant him

(627) The people, who were prepared for these slanders, took no notice of them; but some leading citizens with some of the magistrates were moved by envy to send money secretly to John to enable him to collect mercenaries and make war on Josephus. They further took it upon themselves to pass a decree recalling him from his command [*a*]; (628) but as they did not think that this would suffice, they sent out a force of two thousand five hundred men with four distinguished citizens, Joesdrus, son of Nomicus, Ananias, son of Zaddok, Simon and Judas, sons of Jonathan, all gifted speakers, in order to undermine Josephus' popularity; if he were prepared to leave without hesitation, they were to let him give an account of himself; if he insisted on remaining, they were to treat him as a public enemy. (629) Friends had warned Josephus that troops were on their way to Galilee, but did not explain the reason, as his enemies had made their plans in secret. The result was that he took no countermeasures, and four towns went over to his opponents at their arrival, Sepphoris, Gamala, Gischala and Tiberias. (630) But he quickly recovered them without the use of force, and then by stratagem got the four leaders under his power with the best of their troops and sent them back to Jerusalem [*b*]. (631) They met with a most indignant reception from the people, who would have killed them, as well as those who had sent them, had they not immediately fled.

8. The revolt at Tiberias

(632) From that time on, John was kept within the walls of Gischala by fear of Josephus. A few days later Tiberias again revolted, the citizens having called in King Agrippa. (633) He failed to arrive on the agreed date, but on the same day that a small body of Roman cavalry arrived unexpectedly, the Tiberians issued a proclamation excluding Josephus from the city. (634) Their defection was immediately reported to him at Tarichaeae. He had just sent all his soldiers on a foraging expedition; alone he could not attack the rebels nor could he bide his time waiting for fear that while he was delayed, the king's troops would first arrive in the town. Again, on the following day, he could not take any action due to the restrictions of the Sabbath [*a*].

The ruse of a sham fleet

(635) However, he thought of a ruse to circumvent the rebels. He ordered the gates of Tarichaeae to be shut, in order to prevent any warning of his intentions from reaching the city which was the object of his attack;

then he collected all the boats [*b*] that he could find on the lake—some two hundred and thirty, with no more than four sailors in each— and with this fleet made full speed for Tiberias. (636) He kept far enough from the city to prevent the inhabitants from detecting that his ships were unmanned, and ordered them to ride at anchor out on the lake while he himself, with only seven armed guards, advanced within view of all. (637) On sighting him from the walls, his opponents, who were still vilifying him, imagined that all the boats were filled with armed troops; terrified, they flung down their weapons, and, waving suppliant's olive-branches, begged him to spare the city.

9. (638) Josephus gave vent to threats and reproaches, first for their folly, after taking up arms against Rome, in dissipating their strength beforehand upon civil strife and so playing into the enemies' hands; secondly, for their eagerness to make away with their guardian and protector and their shamelessness in closing their city to him, who had built its defenses [*a*]. Nevertheless, he declared himself ready to receive a delegation that would offer an apology and cooperate in making the city secure. (639) Ten citizens, the principal men of Tiberias, at once came down; these he took on board one of the vessels and carried out to sea. (640) Next he ordered fifty others, leading members of the Council, to come forward, ostensibly to give him their pledge as well. (641) Then by inventing one pretext after another, he called up one group after another, presumably to ratify the agreement. As the boats were successively filled, he ordered the captains to make with all speed to Tarichaeae and to lock the men in prison. In this way, in the end, he arrested the whole Council of six hundred members and about two thousand other citizens and conveyed them to Tarichaeae.

10. (642) The remainder who were left shouted that the real mover of the revolt was a certain Cleitus, and urged the governor to vent his wrath on him. Josephus prepared to put no one to death; (643) so he ordered Levi, one of his guards, to step ashore and cut off Cleitus' hands. The soldier, afraid to go alone into the hostile crowd, refused to go. Cleitus, watching from the beach, saw Josephus on the boat fuming with rage and, preparing to leap out himself to carry out the sentence, besought him to leave him one of his hands. (644) Josephus agreed, on condition that he cut off the other himself, whereupon Cleitus drew his sword with his right hand and severed the left from his body; such was his fear of Josephus.

Tiberias and Sepphoris reduced and pillaged

(645) Thus, with unmanned boats and seven guards, he captured on that occasion the whole population, and once more brought Tiberias back to its allegiance. But a few days later, Josephus found that the city had revolted again in conjunction with Sepphoris, so he delivered it (646) over to the soldiers to pillage. However, he collected all the plunder and gave it back to the townspeople. He did the same at Sepphoris; for he subdued that town as well and decided to give the inhabitants a sharp lesson by pillaging it, and then by restoring their possessions to recover their goodwill.

Chapter XXII

1. Jerusalem's preparation for war in the winter of AD 66–67

(647) In Galilee the disturbances were quelled [*a*]; and, abandoning civil strife, the Jews turned to preparations for the coming war with the Romans [*b*]. (648) In Jerusalem [*a*] Ananus the high priest and all the leading men who were not pro-Roman were repairing the walls [*c*] and preparing machines of war. (649) All over the city they were forging missiles and suits of armor; most of the young men were undergoing irregular training; and there was tumult everywhere. However, the moderates felt dejected;

The excavations of Tiberias (under G. Foerster) have uncovered the Roman city gate built after AD 70. This gate was later covered by Muslim structures

and many, foreseeing the approaching disasters, openly lamented. (650) There were omens too, [*a*] which to the peace-lovers bode ill, but those who lit the fires of war invented favorable interpretations for them at will. In short, the city before the arrival of the Romans wore the appearance of a place doomed to destruction. (651) Ananus, indeed, nourished the hope that if he gradually abandoned the preparations for war, he would bend the malcontents and the infatuated so-called Zealots to a wiser course; but he yielded to their violence, and the sequel of the narrative will show the fate which befell him [*b*].

Raids of Simon bar Giora in Samaria and Idumaea

(652) In the toparchy of Acrabatene [*c*], Simon, son of Giora [*d*], collected a large band of revolutionaries and devoted himself to pillage. Not content with looting the houses of the rich, he further abused them; and it was evident from the start that he was entering on a career of despotism [*d*]. (653) When a force was sent against him by Ananus and the magistrates, he fled with his band to the brigands at Masada [*e*], and there he remained until Ananus and his other opponents were killed. (654) Meanwhile, with his brigand friends, he wrought such havoc in Idumaea [*f*] that he forced the authorities there, in consequence of the number of the slain and the continuous raids, to muster an army and garrison the villages. Such was the condition of affairs in Idumea.

650[*a*] The omens are described in *War* VI, 288–315.

651[*b*] *The Zealots and the Pharisees* If the identification of Judas, the son of Ezekias as Judas of Gamala known as Judas, the Galilean, is correct—which is so according to many scholars— the main inspiration of the Zealot agitation sprang from the same rebellious Galilean family (*War* II, 118, 433) and its affiliates in other parts of the country. They saw Roman oppression as the embodiment of all evil. Invoking the ancient prophecies, heeding the proclamations of new prophets and messianists, they refused obedience to an earthly monarch. As Josephus says (*Antiq.* XVIII): "These men agree in other things with the Pharisaic notions; but they have an inviolable attachment to liberty and they say that God is to be their only Ruler and Lord." Therefore all means were justifiable in removing Roman oppression. "In its rationalization, the movement appeared as a special messianic belief that only through an armed uprising, sustained by God, could the enemy be expelled and God's reign of peace and universal prosperity dawn upon mankind. This is why an extremist wing... the Sicarii had no scruples about murdering a Roman official or a Jewish partisan of Rome... Unfortunately, almost all our knowledge of these ancient revolutionaries and 'terrorists' is derived from statements by opponents (among whom Josephus)... Pharisaic leaders in general denounced these 'brigands' *(biryonim)* for striving by robbery and violence, to set up a Jewish state against Rome. For them no armed clash could decide the struggle with the mighty empire, but the power of the spirit alone. In this sense, the Zealots may be said to have broken away from the main body of Pharisaism and constituted a separate sectarian movement" (S. W. Baron, *ibid.* Vol. II, p. 41).

651[*e*] *War* IV, 315–325. Reference to the high priest Ananus is made above (*War* II, 563).

652[*c*] *Acrabatene* (Akraba) was situated on the border between Judaea and Samaria.

652[*d*] *Simon bar Giora* ("son of a proselyte" in Hebrew) had already proved his mettle in the war with Cestius Gallus (*War* II, 521) but the government in Jerusalem shunned him, possibly because his origin was obscure (a father of foreign blood) but more because this aristocracy feared upstarts and was therefore wary of promoting him to a high command. Nevertheless, Simon grew in stature and was destined to become one of the War's great leaders.

653[*e*] Masada; see references in *War* II, 408, 434, 447.

654[*f*] Simon, in southern Judaea.

Roman siege tower

BOOK III

A. THE WARS IN GALILEE

Chapter I

1. The coming of Vespasian

(1) When Nero heard of the reverses in Judaea he was naturally filled with consternation and alarm, which he kept concealed; in public he treated the matter with contempt and anger, saying: (2) "These unfortunate incidents were due to negligent command rather than the enemy's prowess"; he felt that the majesty of the empire obliged him to treat bad news with lofty disdain and to appear superior to all eventualities. Nevertheless the turmoil of his spirit was betrayed by his visible anxiety.

2. His appointment

(3) He was deliberating into whose hands he could entrust the East in its present disturbed state, with the double responsibility for punishing the Jewish rebellion and anticipating a revolt of the surrounding nations, which were already catching the illness. (4) He found none but Vespasian equal to the emergency and capable of undertaking a war on such an extensive scale. He had been soldiering from youth and grown gray in the service [*a*]; previously in his career he had pacified the West and restored it to Roman rule when it had been thrown into disorder by the Germans; he had by his military ability added Britain to the empire, till then almost unknown, (5) thus enabling Nero's father [*b*], Claudius, who had not personally exerted himself in any way, to celebrate a triumph [*b*].

3. (6) He considered such a record was highly auspicious, and he saw in Vespasian a man with the steadiness resulting from his age [*c*] and experience; his sons, moreover, would be sure hostages for his loyalty, and being in their prime of life they would act as the arm, as their father provided the brain, inspired perhaps by God who was already planning the destinies of empire, (7) Nero sent this general to assume command of the armies in Syria, lavishing upon him every smooth and flattering compliment that necessity demanded in view of the urgent crisis. (8) From Achaia [*a*], where he was on Nero's staff [*a*], Vespasian dispatched his son Titus to Alexandria to bring out the fifteenth legion from that city; he himself crossed the Hellespont [*b*], and proceeded overland to Syria, where he concentrated the Roman forces and numerous allied contingents furnished by the neighboring kings.

4[*a*] *Vespasian* (Titus Flavius Vespasianus) was born in AD 9, the son of an undistinguished member of the equestrian order, who ended his days as a moneylender among the Helvetii, the ancient Swiss. This, however, did not prevent Vespasian and his brother, Flavius Sabinus, from entering the Senate and rising to eminent positions. Vespasian had done well in Germany and in Britain as *legatus* of a legion during Claudius' invasion of the island; there he had successfully fought many battles and was awarded the insignia of a triumph in Rome. In AD 51 he held the consulship, and since then, had governed in North Africa. Once when Vespasian was traveling in Greece with Nero, he fell asleep during one of the emperor's recitals, which made the latter angry. Vespasian promptly made himself scarce in an obscure town until Nero's fury would subside. When the emperor received news of the Judaean revolt he sent Vespasian in the spring of AD 67 to take charge of the expeditionary force.

5[*b*] *Nero's father* Nero was Claudius' adopted son (cf. *War* II, 249). Claudius celebrated a triumph for the conquest in Britain even though he spent only sixteen days in the field there.

6[*c*] Vespasian was 57 years old (Suetonius, *Vesp.* 4).

8[*a*] *Achaia,* in the northern Peloponnesus of Greece.

8[*b*] *Hellespont,* the modern Dardanelles.

9[*a*] *Ascalon* (Ashkelon), formerly a leading Philistine city, had, since early Hellenistic times (third century BC), become a free port and since 104 BC an independent, autonomous city, minting its own coins. The Hasmonean kings failed to conquer it. It was also Herod's native town and he adorned it with palaces, temples and porticoed halls. Hellenistic in culture, the city was cosmopolitan and also had a large Jewish community that kept in close contact with the Pharisaic teachers regarding observance of ancestral religious laws. The city was one of the largest commercial centers in Palestine, covering some 160 acres. Its most important part lay in the center of the ruins of Tell-el-Khadra, in which diggings were undertaken in 1829–1831 by W. Pythian Adams and J. Garstang and, since then, by V. Tsaferis in 1967 and 1972, near the seashore. The finds abound in remains of the Roman period, including the *bouleterion* (Council House) and its porticoes. Both sides of the halls were decorated with sculptures of winged Victories (NIKÉ) holding a wreath in the right hand, the left grasping a palm branch. The Victories stand poised on globes (symbolizing the heavenly sphere or universe) and were carried on the shoulders of figures of Atlas. In three Greek inscriptions found on the spot, two distinguished Roman citizens were honored by the council and the people of Ashkelon *(boulé,* and *demos).* Several imposing sarcophagi of Roman grandees have been uncovered in the area in recent years. Ascalon was 96 kms. from Jerusalem. Irreconcilable feuds had existed with the pagan Ascalonites, and the Jews had recently destroyed the city (*War* II, 460); the wave of optimism in Judaea was a chance to settle old scores and, furthermore, to destroy the Roman garrison.

11[*b*] *Silas* and *John the Essene* had distinguished themselves brilliantly in the war with Cestius Gallus. Niger was also the governor of Idumaea (southern Judaea; *War* II, 566) and John had been recently appointed general in northwestern Judaea (*War* II, 567). Though basically Essenes were not known to have been affiliated with the Zealots, they took part in the great war (a holy war) with Rome; and the famed Dead Sea Scrolls of the "War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness" with its military manual of war, is proof that the Essenes were enjoined to fight to the death in the holy war.

12[*c*] A wing of of the auxiliary Roman cavalry, or *ala.*

Chapter II

1. Disastrous Jewish attacks on Ascalon

(9) After the defeat of Cestius, the Jews, exalted by their unexpected success, could not restrain their enthusiasm, and, as if spurred into activity by this stroke of luck, they determined to extend the war further afield. Without losing time, all their best combatants mustered and marched upon Ascalon [*a*]. (10) This is an ancient city situated five hundred and twenty furlongs from Jerusalem, but the Jews hated it so bitterly that when they made it the first objective of their attack, it seemed much nearer than that. (11) The expedition was led by three men of first-rate prowess and aptitude—Niger from Peraea, Silas the Babylonian [*b*], and John the Essene [*b*]. (12) Ascalon was solidly fortified, but almost deprived of military forces as the garrison consisted of but one cohort of infantry and one troop of cavalry commanded by Antonius [*c*].

Hellenistic cultic ritual

2. (13) The Jews in their fury so accelerated their pace that they reached the spot as though their starting point had been a neighboring base. (14) But Antonius was ready for them, and, advised of their intended attack, led out his cavalry, and in utter disregard of the numbers and audacity of the enemy, firmly sustained their first onslaught and repulsed those attacking the walls. (15) This was a case of novices confronted by veterans, infantry by cavalry, undisciplined individuals by regulars fighting as one body, men casually armed with nondescript weapons against fully armed legionaries; on the one side men guided by passion rather than prudence, and on the other disciplined troops who instantly responded to the slightest signal of their commander. (16) The issue of the battle was a foregone conclusion. Once their front ranks were broken, they were routed by the cavalry, and the fugitives collided with those in the rear who pushed forward towards the wall. Thus they became each other's enemies, until finally the whole mass, succumbing to the cavalry charges, were dispersed all over the plain. (17) This was very wide and ideal for cavalry tactics, a fact which greatly assisted the Romans and led to a frightful carnage on the Jewish side; for the fugitives were headed off and turned back by the cavalry and when they were herded together in flight, the horsemen charged right through and slaughtered them in mass and, whichever way they fled, the Romans galloped round them and slaughtered them wholesale with their javelins. (18) In spite of their numbers, the Jews felt in their distress that

Aerial view of Ascalon 1. Area of the Roman city. 2. Modern Ascalon (1960)

they were terribly alone, while the Romans, few as they were, were succeeding so steadily that they felt as if they actually outnumbered the enemy. (19) However, the Jews battled despite their reverses, ashamed of their swift rout and hoping for a return of fortune, while the Romans relentlessly followed up their success, so the struggle was prolonged till dusk, when ten thousand Jewish soldiers, with two of the commanders, John and Silas, had fallen. (20) The survivors, wounded for the most part, took refuge with Niger, the one commander left, in a country town of Idumaea called Chaallis [*a*]. (21) Roman casualties in this engagement were but a few wounded.

3. (22) However, far from being dispirited by this calamity, the Jews were stimulated by defeat to still greater audacity and, disregarding the dead bodies at their feet, they were lured by the memory of their earlier triumphs to another disaster. (23) Without even waiting for their wounds to heal they mustered all their forces and with greater fury than before, and, much greater numbers, they rushed to assault Ascalon. (24) But, added to their inexperience and other military incapacity, their usual ill-luck went with them. (25) Antonius had laid ambuscades in the passes, and they unknowingly fell into these traps; before they could form in battle order they were encircled by the cavalry and again lost over eight thousand men. The survivors all fled, including Niger, who during the retreat gave substantial proof of his heroism. In the end, hard pressed by the enemy, they were driven into a fortified tower in a village called Belzedek [*b*]. (26) The troops of Antonius, unwilling to wear out their strength in an attack on this almost impregnable stronghold, or else allow the enemy's courageous general and hero to escape them, set fire to the walls [*a*]. (27) When they saw the tower ablaze, the Romans withdrew, satisfied that Niger had perished with it; they were not aware that he had leapt from the tower and escaped into a cave in the very recesses of the fort; three days later his friends, who were seeking his body for burial, heard his muffled voice beneath them. (28) Niger's reappearance filled all Jewish hearts with undreamed of joy; they felt sure that God's providence had preserved him to lead them into battle in the conflicts to come [*b*].

4. Vespasian's advance; Sepphoris' capitulation

(29) Vespasian had now mobilized his forces assembled at Antioch [*a*], the capital of Syria, a city which for size and opulence undoubtedly ranks third [*a*] among the cities of the Roman Empire. He found here, among others, King Agrippa awaiting his arrival with his whole army. Vespasian pushed on from Antioch to Ptolemais [*b*]. (30) He was met there by the inhabitants of Sepphoris in Galilee, the only people in Galilee who sought peace. (31) With an eye to their own safety and a realization of the power of Rome, they had already, before Vespasian arrived, given

20[*a*] *Chaallis,* or Kfar Shihlayim in southern Judaea, some 16 kms. from Beth-Govrin (Eleutheropolis).
25[*b*] *Belzedek* is Beth-Zedek, southeast of Kfar Shihlayim.
26[*a*] *Fire* was set with firewood at the foot of the wall, where it cracked the stones and mortar, causing the wall to collapse. This method had been used since biblical times, for example, the siege of Lachish by the Babylonians in 701 BC.
28[*b*] *Niger* was eventually murdered by the Zealots during one of the bitterest feuds in the Jerusalem siege (*War* IV, 359).
29[*a*] *Third* The largest after Rome and Alexandria.
29[*b*] Following Cestius Gallus' defeat, the Romans under Vespasian organized a well-disciplined and effective expeditionary force to crush the revolt. It was centered at Ptolemais (Acco) and consisted of three legions (two from Egypt, one from Syria, plus Agrippa's auxiliary force) totaling in all 60,000 men.
31[*c*] *Caesennius Gallus,* the same commander of the XIIth legion who had been welcomed by Sepphoris (cf. *War* II, 510). The statement is worth comparing with Josephus' *Life,* 394 which relates that Sepphoris asked for and obtained a garrison from Cestius Gallus.
34[*d*] At this point of progress in the invasion, the narrative is interrupted and resumed in par. 59 below.

Half-shekel of Tyre, Phoenicia

guarantees to Caesennius Gallus [*c*], received his assurances, and admitted a Roman garrison [*c*]; (32) and now they gave an enthusiastic reception to the commander-in-chief and promised him their help against their countrymen. (33) At their request, the general allotted to them for the time being a defensive force of cavalry and infantry, which he considered adequate to repel incursions if the Jews might cause trouble; (34) for he thought that it would seriously endanger the impending campaign if he lost Sepphoris, the largest city in Galilee, a fortress ideally sited within the enemy's territory, and suited to stand guard over the whole province [*d*].

Chapter III

1. Description of Galilee

(35) Galilee consists of two parts, known as Upper and Lower [*a*], which are shut in by Phoenicia and Syria. They are bounded on the west by Ptolemais with its border region and Carmel, a mountain once belonging to Galilee but now to Tyre [*b*]. (36) Adjoining Carmel is Gaba [*c*], known as "the city of cavalry" because King Herod's cavalry settled there on their discharge. (37) On the south Galilee is

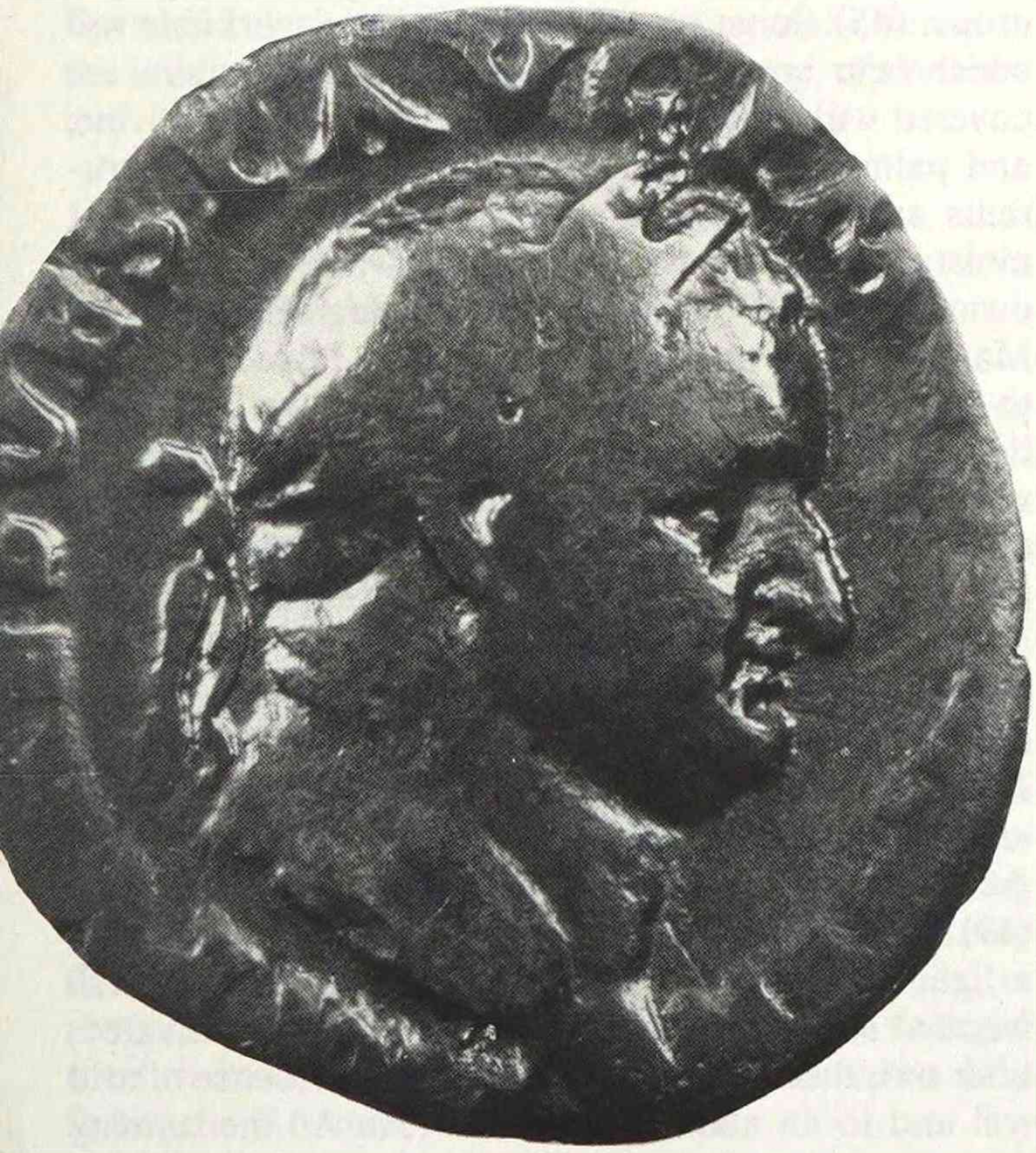
35[*a*] The two parts under which Galilee is defined are also attested by Talmudic evidence (*Mishna Shevi'it* IX, 2; *Sanhedrin* XI, 72).

35[*b*] *Echoes of Tyre's annexation of territory in Western Galilee.* An instance of this annexation to pagan Tyre, with the backing of the Roman general Cassius (*War* I, 225, 231), may be found in Mark Antony's absolute order to pagan Tyre in 42 BC (*Antiq.* XIV, 313–316). He ordered the city to return Jewish property it had annexed during the civil war which raged between the Hasmonean ethnarch Hyrcanus and his opponent, Antigonus (*War* I, 165 ff). There is a historic connection between Tyre's annexation of Jewish lands and the Galilean peasant uprising led by the early Zealot Hezekiah (*War* I, 204; II, 56) at the time that young Herod governed Galilee. Hezekiah was ultimately executed. It was pointed out in this connection that the origin of a Jewish resistance movement to Roman and pagan encroachments of Jewish rights stemmed from the Jewish peasantry's hunger for land, which casts a long shadow over the rise of the Zealot movement in the following generations. Moreover, the bitter antagonism between Jews and pagans in the borderlands of Galilee and pagan Syria exploded during the Jewish attacks (and counterattacks) after the massacre in Caesarea (*War* II, 457–560).

36[*c*] *Gaba,* north of Mount Carmel, was one of the gentile cities attacked by the Jews in AD 66.

Peraea, east of the Jordan

Silver coin bearing the image of Vespasian



Gerasa (modern Jerash), a Hellenistic city in Peraea. Left foreground: Temple of Zeus; middleground: the circular Forum surrounded by a colonnade; left in the distance: Temple of Artemis

bounded by Samaria and Scythopolis as far as the Jordan river; on the east by the territories of Hippos, Gadara and Gaulanitis, which form the boundary of Agrippa's kingdom [*d*]; (38) on its northern frontier lie Tyre and its dependent territory. Lower Galilee extends in length from Tiberias to Chabulon [*e*] which is not far from Ptolemais on the coast; (39) and in width from the village of Xaloth in the Great Plain [*f*] to Beersheba. At this point begins Upper Galilee, which extends in width as far as Baca, a village on the Tyrian frontier; (40) in length, it reaches from Thella, a village near the Jordan, to Meroth [*g*].

2. (41) Small as they are, and though encircled by such powerful foreign neighbors, the two Galilees have always held out against enemy invasion, (42) for the Galileans are accustomed to war from the cradle and have at all times been numerous; and never has the lack of courage afflicted the men, nor a declining population the land. For the whole area is excellent for crops or pasturage and rich in trees of every kind, so that by its fertility it invites even those least inclined to work on the land. (43) In fact, every inch of it has been cultivated by the inhabitants and not a parcel goes to waste. It is thickly covered with towns, and thanks to the natural abundance of the soil, the many villages are so densely populated that the smallest of them has more than fifteen thousand inhabitants [*a*].

3. Peraea

(44) While Galilee, in fact, is smaller in size than Peraea, it is noted for its productivity; for it is entirely cultivated and produces crops from end to end, while Peraea [*b*], though much greater, is for the most part desert and rugged soil, too wild to produce mature crops. (45) Some parts, however, have workable soil which bear crops of every species, and the plains are covered with trees of every variety, chiefly olive, vine, and palms. The country is watered by mountain torrents and by perennial springs that provide sufficient moisture in the heat of summer when the torrents dwindle. (46) Peraea extends in length from Machaerus [*c*] to Pella, in width from Philadelphia [*c*] to the Jordan. (47) Pella, which we have just mentioned, forms the northern boundary, the Jordan the western; the southern limit is the land of Moab [*d*] and on the east it is bounded by Arabia [*d*], Heshbonitis [*d*], Philadelphia [*d*] and Gerasa [*d*].

4. Samaria and Judaea

(48) The province of Samaria lies between Galilee and Judaea [*a*]; beginning at the village of Ginaea [*a*] situated in the Great Plain; it ends at the toparchy of Acrabatene [*b*]. It is exactly like Judaea in character. (49) Both regions are made up of hills and plains, with a light and fertile soil fit for cultivation, and are well wooded and prolific in fruit, both wild and cultivated; both owe their productivity to the total absence of arid soil and to an abundant rainfall. (50) All the running

37[*d*] See map of northern Palestine and the area of Agrippa's kingdom.

38[*e*] *Chabulon* is Grecized Cabul, on the frontier between Ptolemais and Galilee (cf. *War* II, 504).

39[*f*] *The Great Plain* is Jezreel (Esdraelon); and *Beersheba* is the border town between Upper and Lower Galilee and not Beersheba of the Negeb in southern Palestine; *Xaloth* is the modern village of Iskal on the slopes of Mount Tabor. See map and area south of Sepphoris.

40[*g*] *Meroth* is Meron, cf. II, 573[*a*].

43[*a*] *Galilee's* rural areas were apparently more densely populated than rural Judaea. The well developed agriculture and crafts of its villages supported a few thousand inhabitants each, but a figure of 15,000 is an obvious exaggeration, particularly if this figure is multiplied by some two hundred Galilean villages and towns cited by Josephus (*Life*, 235). The largest town was Sepphoris, and the largest village was *Yafia* located near the then village of Nazareth.

44[*b*] *Peraea,* east of the Jordan, ranks second in Judaea in importance, followed by Galilee (also in *Mishna Shevi'it* VI, I).

46[*c*] *Machaerus* was in Jewish Peraea, but *Pella* and *Philadelphia* actually lay beyond its geographic borders, though close to the borderlines and within the area of the *Decapolis* (the ten-city league province, see map). *Philadelphia* is modern Amman.

47[*d*] *Moab* is situated east of the Dead Sea. *Arabia* refers to Nabatean territory. *Heshbonitis* is ancient biblical Heshbon south of Philadelphia, and *Gerasa* is modern Jerash; (cf. *War* II, 458, 480).

48[*a*] The name *Judaea* refers here to Palestine's central region (Judea). This name was also used by the ancients to designate all ancient Palestine; see map.

Ginaea is modern Jenin (called *Gema* in *War* II, 652; cf. map).

48[*b*] *Acrabatene* (modern Akraba) southeast of Shechem (*War* II, 652).

The design of a legendary winged creature on a clay rhyton (drinking cup) was one of the rare finds at Sepphoris

water is remarkably sweet, and due to an abundance of good grass the cows produce more milk than elsewhere. But the best indication of their thriving condition is the dense population of both countries.

5. Judaea

(51) On their common border which separates them lies the village called Anuath Borcaeus [*a*], the farthest limit of Judaea on the north; the southern boundary if one measures the country at its greatest length, is marked by a village on the Arabian border, known as Iardan [*b*] to the local Jews. In width it stretches from the River Jordan to Joppa. (52) The city of Jerusalem lies right in the middle, so that some have quite fittingly called her the "navel" of the country [*c*]. (53) Moreover, Judaea is not cut off from the amenities of the sea, as it slopes down towards the coast on a ridge extending as far as Ptolemais [*d*]. (54) It is divided into eleven districts [*e*], of which Jerusalem, as the capital, has the primacy, raised above the whole neighborhood as the head above the body. The remaining districts coincide with the toparchies. (55) Gophna ranks second, followed by Acrabeta, Thamna, Lydda, Emmaus, Pella [*a*], Idumaea, Engaddi, Herodion, and Jericho. (56) To these may be added Jamnia and Joppa [*b*], which control the surrounding localities, and lastly the territories of Gamla, Gaulanitis, Batanaea and Trachonitis [*b*], which form part of Agrippa's dominions.

Agrippa's kingdom

(57) Beginning at Mount Libanus and the sources of the Jordan, that kingdom extends in width to the Lake of Tiberias, and in length [*c*] from a village called Arpha [*c*] to Julias [*c*]; its population is a mixture of Jews and Syrians. (58) The foregoing must serve as the briefest possible outline of the country, of the Jews and its neighbors.

B. THE ROMAN ARMY

Chapter IV

1. Galilee ravaged by the Roman garison

(59) The supportive force that Vespasian sent to the people of Sepphoris [*a*] consisted of a thousand cavalry and six thousand infantry commanded by the tribune Placidus; after camping in the Great Plain the force divided, the infantry moving into the city as a garrison for protection, the cavalry remaining in camp. (60) Both made constant sorties overrunning the surrounding territory and doing considerable damage to Josephus and his men [*b*]. If the latter remained inactive in their towns, the Romans ravaged the surrounding area; whenever they ventured to sally forth, the Romans drove them back.

51[*a*] *Anuath Borcaeus* is the modern village of Birkit, about 28 kms south of Shechem.

51[*b*] *Iardan* is Khirbet Irk, south of Gaza in the southwestern Negeb.

52[*c*] The "navel" of the country was an epithet glorifying Jerusalem's holiness since ancient days (Ezekiel 38, 12) and eternalized in the author's time (cf. *Sanhedrin* 37) in honor of the Temple. This epithet was also adopted by the early Christian Fathers.

53[*d*] *Joppa,* its coast, and *Ptolemais* were in Jewish possession until their capture by Vespasian in AD 67. The author's geographical summary precedes the event and is factually correct.

54[*e*] *Districts* See map of Judaea (Palestine) and its main towns on the eve of the Roman War. Its divisions still bear a resemblance to Herod's administrative districts. Though Josephus dwells fondly elsewhere on the lushness of the province of Judaea (*War* I, 138[*b*]), a reference to its fertility is absent in the present passage.

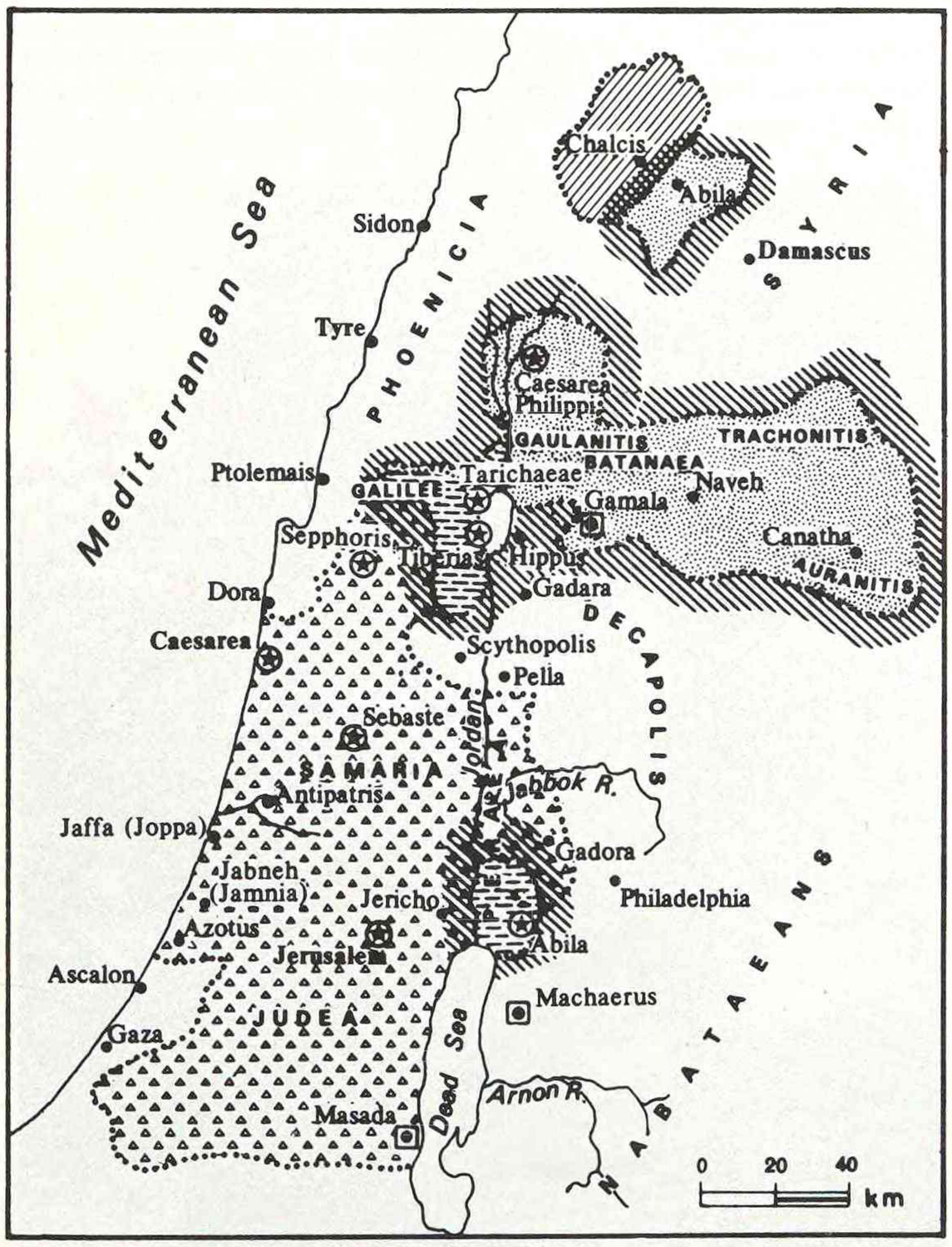
55[*a*] *Pella* lends its name to one of the toparchies, but its correct name is Beit-Latefa (modern Beit Natufa).

56[*b*] The author's estimate of Jewish territory therefore includes the four main provinces and, in addition (1) the two maritime towns of Joppa and Jamnia with a majority of Jews, cf. 53 [*d*] above, and (2) Agrippa's kingdom (including Gamla and vast territories east of it even though they consisted of a mixed Jewish and pagan population.

57[*c*] In "width" from north to south, and in "length" from east to west. *Arpha* or *Rapha* is a town in Batanaea, west of Trachonitis; and *Julias* is Beth-Saida on the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee (see map).

59[*a*] The author resumes here the war narrative; cf. *War* III, 33.

60[*b*] The loss of *Sepphoris* (cf. 30 above) created a serious gap in Josephus' chain of fortified Jewish towns which he had to protect. Vespasian's reinforcements for Sepphoris and Placidus' second campaign aggravated his position.



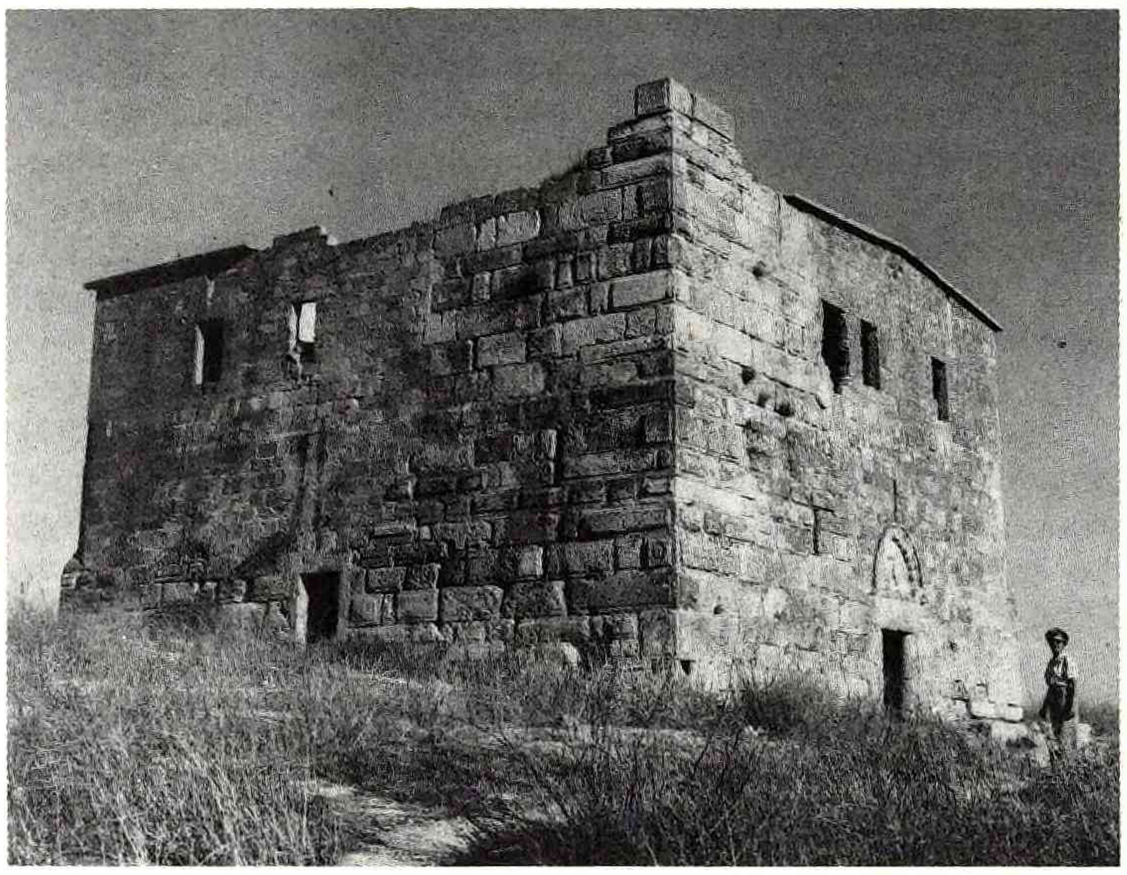
61[*a*] This was Josephus' third attempt to possess the city. Two other attacks on Sepphoris, before Vespasian's intervention, are recorded in *Life*, 374–380 and 395 ff.

64[*a*] Cf. 8 [*a*] above.

66[*b*] *Cohort*, numbering about 600 men, or the tenth part of a legion.

68[*c*] Antiochus IV was king of Commagene in Asia Minor; Soemus, king of Emessa, north of Syria.

69[*a*] A more precise calculation of the units enumerated above provides a total approximating 58,720.



Ancient fortified building of Sepphoris showing later reconstruction

Roman milestone found at Affula (the "Great Plain"*) situated between Samaria and Galilee, commemorating Caesar Vespasianus and his X Legion Fretensis*

Josephus' unsuccessful attack on Sepphoris

(61) Josephus actually tried to assail the city in the hope of capturing it, though before it abandoned the Galileans, he himself had fortified it so strongly that it was almost impregnable, even to the Romans. Consequently his attempt failed for he found it beyond his power to bring Sepphoris to surrender [*a*] either by force or by persuasion. (62) Moreover, his exertions aggravated the war in the country; the Romans, in retaliation for his attack, never ceased, night or day, to ravage the plains and plunder the villagers' belongings, invariably killing anyone fit to bear arms and enslaving those who could not resist. (63) Galilee from one end to the other became a scene of fire and bloodshed; no horror, no calamity was it spared; the only refuge for the hunted inhabitants was in the towns which Josephus had fortified.

2. The strength of the Roman army

(64) Titus [*a*], meanwhile, had sailed from Achaia to Alexandria after a swifter passage than is usual in the winter season. There he assumed command over the forces which he had been sent to fetch, and by a forced march quickly reached Ptolemais. (65) There he found his father with his two legions, the world famous fifth and tenth, and now united them to the fifteenth which he had brought. (66) To these legions were attached eighteen cohorts [*b*]; they were joined also by five cohorts and one squadron of cavalry from Caesarea, and five squadrons of cavalry from Syria. (67) Of these twenty-three cohorts, ten numbered each a thousand cavalry, the remaining thirteen having each a strength of six hundred infantry and a hundred and twenty cavalry. (68) A further considerable auxiliary contingent was contributed by the kings Antiochus, Agrippa, and Soaemus [*c*], each furnishing two thousand unmounted bowmen and a thousand cavalry, while the Arab Malchus sent a thousand cavalry and five thousand infantry, most of them bowmen. (69) Thus the total strength of the forces, cavalry and infantry, including the contingents of the kings, totaled sixty thousand [*a*], other than the servants who followed in vast numbers and may properly be regarded as combatants, because they shared their military training; they always took part in their masters' maneuvers in peace and in war and they shared their dangers, yielding to none but them in skill and prowess.

Chapter V

1. A description of the Roman army

(70) One must admire the remarkable foresight of the Romans in making their domestic staff useful to them not only for the ministrations of everyday life but also in war. (71) Anyone who will observe the organization of their army as a whole will appreciate that they hold their wide-flung empire as the prize of valor, not as a

gift of fortune. (72) They do not wait for war to break out to give men their first lesson in handling arms, nor do they sit idle in peacetime and become active only when the emergency arises. On the contrary, as if born ready armed, they never have a lull from training and never wait for the emergency to arise. (73) Moreover, their battle drills are no different from veritable warfare; every soldier works as hard at his daily training as if he were in active service. That is why they stand up so easily to the shock of battle; (74) no confusion dislodges their customary formation, no panic incapacitates them, no fatigue exhausts them; and as their opponents cannot match their qualities, victory over men not so trained follows invariably and certainly. (75) Indeed it would not be exaggerated to call their drills bloodless combats, their battles bloody maneuvers. (76) The Romans never give their enemy a chance to catch them off their guard; for whenever they invade hostile territory, they avoid battle until they have fortified their camp [*b*]. (77) This camp is not constructed haphazardly or unevenly, nor do they set to work at once or in disorderly groups; if the ground is uneven, it is first leveled; then the site is marked out as a square [*a*]. (78) For this purpose the army is followed by a large number of workmen and of building tools.

2. (79) The interior of the camp is divided up into rows of huts. The exterior perimeter presents the appearance of a wall and is equipped with towers at regular intervals; (80) in the gaps between the towers they mount quick-firers, catapults, stone-throwers [*b*] and every type of artillery engines, all ready for use. (81) Four gates are set, one in each lenghth of wall, practicable for the entry of beasts of burden and wide enough for sallies of troops in emergencies. (82) The camp is intersected by streets symmetrically marked out; in the middle are erected the huts of the officers, and in their center the headquarters of the commander [*c*], resembling a shrine. (83) It all seems like an improvised town, with its market-place, artisans' quarters, and seats of judgment [*c*] where centurions and tribunes [*d*] can settle disputes which may arise. (84) The erection of the outer wall and the buildings inside is accomplished faster than you might think, thanks to the numerous skilled workers. Where necessary, the camp is further surrounded by a ditch, four cubits [*a*] deep and of equal width.

3. Camp routine

(85) The fortifications completed, the men go to their quarters, unit by unit, quietly and in good order. All their fatigue duties are carried out with attention to discipline and with regard for security; the procuring of wood, food and water, as required, being brought in by the units detailed. (86) Times for supper and breakfast are not left to individual discretion; all take their meals together. The hours for sleep, guard-duty, and reveille are announced by trumpet calls; nothing

76[*b*] They were drilled twice a day to march in formation and to jump, climb, ride, ford rivers, attack enemy formations; they were also trained to erect fortifications, throw dykes and the like. This description is apparently based on Polybius' work (VI, 19–42), which describes the army organization in the preceding century.

77[*a*] *Square* See illustration of camps below Masada (*War* VII). The army was followed by a large number of engineers and craftsmen equipped with all the tools required for building, and under the supervision of a special commander, the *praefectus fabrum*.

80[*b*] The *catapults* or *scorpiones* were mechanical contrivances which discharged arrows by means of a windlass; the stone-throwers or *balistae* discharged rounded stones with high angle fire.

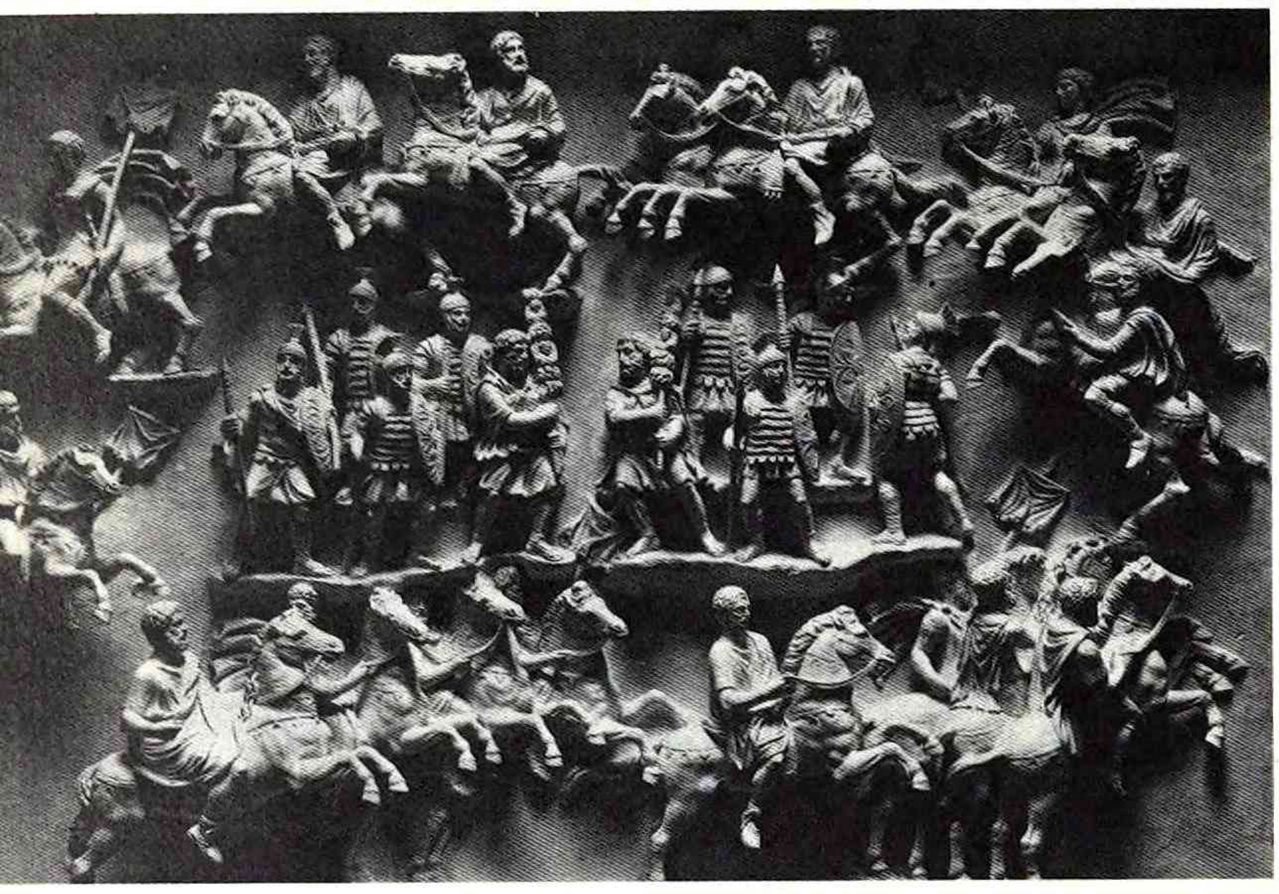
82[*c*] The commander's quarters were called the *praetorium* and nearby was a *forum* (public or market-place).

83[*d*] *Centurions* (commanding 100) and tribunes (1000 men).

84[*a*] 4 cubits equal approx. 2 m.

Roman "trophy" given in victory to its rightful hero (Museum of Rhodes)

87[*b*] The legion was commanded by a legate.
89[*a*]–90[*a*]–91[*a*] The trumpet calls described by Polybius were (a) to lower tents, collect baggage; [*b*] load the beasts; (c) march.
94[*a*] The breastplate consisted of leather plates to cover the chest and back; the leather helmets were often covered with a metal coating.
94[*b*] This statement seems to contradict other evidence on the subject.
94[*c*] *Span,* approximately 23–25 cms.
95[*d*] *Lance* or *hasta,* the broad buckler—*parma.*
95[*e*] *Javelin—pilum,* oblong buckler—*scutum.*
107[*a*] *Ister,* the river Danube.



A parade of infantry and cavalry on a relief at the base of the column of Antoninus Pius (Vatican Museum). Roman monuments and ancient drawings manifest the military might of the empire, as described by Josephus, who knew of them at first hand

Roman horn; found in Spain

is done without orders. (87) At daybreak the rank and file report by unit to their centurions, the centurions go to salute their tribunes, and the tribunes accompany all the officers to the commander-in-chief [*b*]; (88) and he gives them, according to routine, the password and other orders to be communicated to their subordinates. They act with the same precision on the battlefield; the troops change direction promptly as required, and, whether attacking or retreating, move as one man upon command.

4. The army on the march

(89) When camp is to be struck, the trumpet [*a*] sounds a first call, and every man springs to duty instantly; at this signal huts are dismantled and all preparations made for departure. (90) The trumpets then sound a second call [*a*] to stand by to march; at once they load the mules and other beasts of burden and stand ready to start, like runners lined up at the cord on the race-course. They then set fire to the camp, both because they can easily reconstruct it, and to prevent the enemy from ever making use of it. (91) For the third time [*a*] the trumpets give a similar signal for departure, to urge on the movement of stragglers who have been loitering, and to ensure that not a man is out of his place in the ranks. (92) Then the herald, standing on the right of the supreme commander, asks three times in their native tongue whether they are ready for war. Three times they shout loudly and lustily in reply, "We are ready," some even anticipating the question; and filled with a kind of martial fervor, raise their right arms in the air as they shout.

5. The infantry's equipment

(93) Then they advance, all marching silently and in good order, each man keeping his place in the column, as though facing the enemy. (94) The infantry are armed with a coat of mail [*a*] and a helmet [*a*], and carry a sword on each side; that on the left is by far the longer of the two [*b*], the dagger being no longer than a span [*c*] in length. (95) The general's bodyguard of picked infantry carry a lance [*d*] and round buckler [*f*], the other units a javelin [*e*] and oblong shield, together with a saw, basket, ax and pick, as well as a strap, bill-hook, a chain and three days' rations, so that an infantryman is about as heavily loaded as a pack-mule.

The cavalry's equipment

(96) The cavalry carry a large sword on their right side, a very long lance in the hand, a shield slanted across the horse's flank, and in a quiver slung beside them three or more pikes with broad points and as long as spears; their helmets and coat of mail are of the same pattern as those of the infantry. (97) Equipment is the same for the general's mounted escort as for the other cavalry units. Lots are always drawn for the legion that is to lead the column.

6. Military tactics

(98) Such is the Roman routine on the march and in camp, and such is the variety of equipment. In battle nothing is done without plan or left to chance: careful thought invariably precedes action, and action must conform to the decision reached. (99) As a result, the Romans rarely meet with failure, and if anything goes wrong, they easily repair the error. (100) They consider, moreover, that a planned but unsucessful stroke is preferable to a success due to luck, because victories that come of themselves are a temptation to improvidence, whereas, deliberation, though occasionally leading to failure, teaches a useful lesson on how to avoid the same mistake. (101) They further reflect that good things that come by a happy accident bring no credit to the recipient, while disasters that upset all calculations leave at least the consolation that no proper precautions were neglected.

7. Discipline and efficiency of the army

(102) Military exercises give the Roman soldiers not only tough bodies but also determined spirits; fear, too, plays a part in their training methods; (103) for military law demands the death penalty not only for desertion of the ranks but even some slight neglect of duty, and the generals are held in greater awe even than the laws, since by rewarding the brave they avoid seeming harsh towards the men they punish. (104) This perfect discipline makes the army a credit to Rome in peacetime and in war welds the whole into a single body. (105) So compact are their ranks, so flexible their maneuvers in wheeling to right or left, so quick their ears for orders, their eyes for signals, their hands to act upon tasks to be done. (106) Thus it is that they are as quick to act as they are slow in succumbing to suffering, and never have they been known in any engagement to be worsted by numbers, by tactical skill, by difficulties of terrain, or even by fortune, which is far less within their grasp than is their ardent assurance of victory. (107) Where planning precedes action, where the leader's plan of campaign is followed by so effective an army, who can wonder that the Roman Empire has extended its frontiers on the east to the Euphrates, on the west to the ocean, on the south to the richest plains of Libya, on the north to the Ister [*a*] and the Rhine. One might say without exaggeration that the conquests are less remarkable than the people who won them.

8. Conclusion

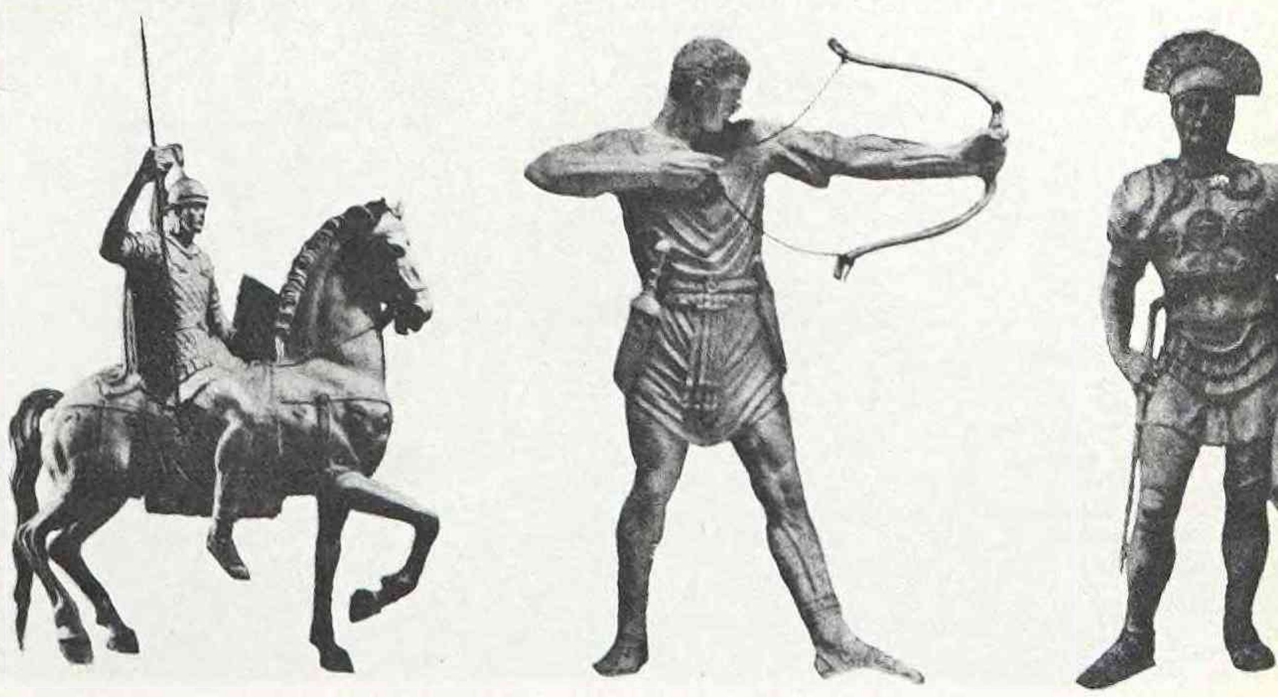
(108) If I have spoken extensively on this topic, I intended less to eulogize the Roman than to console their defeated enemies and to deter any who may be tempted to revolt [*b*]; (109) and perhaps, those knowledgeable readers who are unacquainted with the subject may find profit in this account of the set-up of the Roman army. I will now return to my narrative at the point where I have disgressed [*c*].

108[*b*] *Political significance of a review of the Roman might* The motive behind it, and its conclusion, are significant and, as suggested by R. Laquer's work on Josephus, indicative of the attitude when he penned his work in Rome. It is both a description of the events seen by the historian and, on the other hand, a veiled warning intended to make Rome's enemies in the east (Parthia) realize that further opposition was futile. In Roman eyes, the danger posed by these oriental rulers, or by the Jews in Babylon (namely the Jewish Kingdom of Adiabene, cf. *War* II, 388) was a constant menace as proven by the great risings in the days of Hadrian some fifty years later. Furthermore, Josephus' long speech about the might of the Roman army matches his description of Agrippa's speech to the Jerusalem population (*War* II, 345–401) about the futility of challenging the irresistible might of the Roman Empire. Both descriptions were penned about the same time, prompted by Josephus' pacifism.

109[*c*] Cf. 59 ff.

A legionary and his weapons

Mounted Roman cavalryman, archer and legionary



110[*a*] *Placidus* headed the Roman forces at Ptolemais (Acco) and had launched former attacks on Galilee.

111[*b*] *Jotapata* is the Hebrew Yotbah (Mizpe Yodfat) perched on the northern slopes of Mt. Atzmon. It was one of the cities Josephus had fortified, and lay midway between Gabara and Sepphoris, some 8 kms away. The hill guarded the road from the coast to the Sea of Galilee. It is identified with modern Khirbet Jifat (and shards uncovered there show that it was inhabited in the Late Bronze Age). It is mentioned in the *Mishna* (*Arach.* 9, 6) among the walled cities traditionally dating back to the time of Joshua's conquest. There are no visible remains of the Roman siege works since any actual elements of stone have been removed by the Arab natives for building.

117[*a*] *Century* A hundred troopers. Cf. note 124 [*b*].

120[*b*] *Cavalry* This was a smaller contingent than the traditional mounted forces for each legion; this may be accounted for by the mountainous region to be conquered, or by the additional mounted forces that the mercenaries provided.

121[*c*] *Siege towers,* which carried the battering-rams, antiquity's formidable arm of siege. The mules carried the latter as well.

122[*d*] *Legates*—generals.

123[*a*] The standards were large hard flags ensigns with medallions carrying the emperor's image (cf. *War* II, 169–174). The proud eagle was borne on a pole carried by a legionary.

124[*b*] *Centurion,* commanding approximately 100 legionaries. A centurion may have followed each legion-formation as well.

126[*c*] *Mercenaries.* This seems to indicate the remaining auxiliary cohorts, a part of whom is mentioned in para. 116 as being sent in advance of the Roman column.

129[*d*] *Garis* was a village about 3 kms from Sepphoris. The troops Josephus had trained were easily defeated.

131[*e*] *Outcome* This episode marked the end of field encounters, attacks and counterattacks between Jews and Romans in Galilee. The rest of the war would be fought out over possession of the strongholds.

132[*a*] *Gabara* A town in Galilee due east of Ptolemais, 9 kms N. of Jotapata, (*War* II, 629; *Life,*123); also mentioned in *Life,* 229, 242 as Gabaroth in connection with Josephus' encounter with Jonathan and his colleagues who had been dispatched by the government in Jerusalem.

*The standards of the Praetorian legionaries. An outstretched hand (*manus*) with fingers and thumbs together, appears on the top of the standard. Each* "century" *(100 men) had its own standard (Trajan's Column, Rome; see illus. facing para. 141*

Moorish horsemen belonging to an auxilia. *They were aids to the citizen legionaries and fought with them in all major wars (Trajan's Column, Rome; AD 98–117)*

Chapter VI

1. Unsuccessful attack on Jotapata

(110) While Vespasian, with his son Titus, spent some time at Ptolemais organizing his forces, Placidus [*a*] swept through Galilee destroying large numbers of men who fell into his hands, these being the feebler civilians who were exhausted by flight; (111) afterwards, seeing that the combatants regularly took shelter in the towns that Josephus had fortified, he set out to attack the most formidable of them, Jotapata [*b*]. He thought that he would easily capture it by a sudden assault, thus establishing his reputation with his superiors and at the same time help them considerably in the coming campaign, because once the strongest town had fallen, the other towns would surrender out of fear. (112) But his hopes were greatly disappointed. Forewarned of his approach, the people of Jotapata awaited him outside of the town and pounced unsuspectingly upon the Romans. With large numbers, ready for battle and determined to ward off the danger that threatened their city, their wives, and children, they quickly routed their opponents and wounded a large number of them. (113) However, no more than seven were killed thanks to the orderliness of the Roman retreat; this was due to the superficial nature of their wounds—their bodies being completely protected—and the fact that the Jews, who were lightly armed, did not venture to come to close quarters with the heavily armed legionaries, but preferred to launch their missiles at long range. (114) Three Jews were killed and a few wounded. So Placidus decided that he was not strong enough to attack the town and beat a retreat.

2. Vespasian's advance into Galilee

(115) Vespasian, determined to invade Galilee himself, set out from Ptolemais after drawing up his army in the usual Roman marching order. (116) The auxiliary light-armed troops and bowmen formed the vanguard to repel any sudden attacks of the enemy and to reconnoiter woodland suspected of concealing ambushes. Next came a body of armed Roman troops, mounted and unmounted. (117) They were followed by a detachment of ten men from each century [*a*], carrying their own supplies and the necessary instruments for marking out the camp; (118) after them came the road-builders to straighten out curves in the highway, level rough surfaces, and cut down obstructive woods in order to spare the army the fatigue of laborious marching. (119) Behind these the personal baggage of the commander and his senior officers was concentrated under the protection of a strong cavalry escort; (120) then Vespasian himself rode with the pick of the infantry and cavalry and his guard of lancers. After Vespasian came the cavalry [*b*] units of the legion, for each legion has its own troops of a hundred and twenty horses. (121) These were followed by the mules that carried the siege towers [*c*] and the other war engines. (122) After them came the legates [*d*], the cohort commanders and tribunes, with an escort of picked troops. (123) Next the standards [*a*] surrounding the eagle [*a*], which in the Roman army precedes every legion, because it is the king and the most fearless of all birds: they regard this as the symbol of empire and the portent of victory, whoever may be their adversaries. (124) The sacred emblems were followed by the trumpeters and in their wake came the solid column, shoulder to shoulder, six men abreast, accompanied as always by a centurion [*b*] to maintain the formation of the ranks. (125) The servants of each legion marched in a body behind the infantry, conducting the mules and other beasts of burden, which carried the soldiers' baggage. (126) In the rear of all the column marched the bulk of the mercenaries [*c*], and last of all, a protective rearguard of light and heavy infantry and a strong body of cavalry.

3. Josephus' retreat to Tiberias

(127) Proceeding in this order, Vespasian and his army arrived at the frontiers of Galilee. There he established his camp, and, restraining his soldiers' zeal for battle, he paraded his troops before the enemy to intimidate them; by doing so, he gave them time for second thoughts in case they would come to a wiser frame of mind before the battle was joined. At the same time he made preparations to besiege their strongholds. (128) The sight of the commander-in-chief did indeed lead to second thoughts among many, and alarm in them all. (129) The troops under the command of Josephus, who were encamped before a town called Garis [*d*] not far from Sepphoris, seeing the war approaching and the Romans on the point of swooping upon them at any moment, dispersed and fled not only before the battle, but even before seeing their opponents. (130) Left behind with a handful of men, Josephus saw that his forces were not capable of stopping the enemy, that the morale of the Jews had collapsed, and that the majority of them, if they could get the Romans to trust them, would be only too pleased to capitulate. (131) He was already apprehensive of the ultimate outcome of war [*e*] looming ahead, but for the time being he decided to avoid, as far as possible, the risk of a conflict. Accordingly, with his remaining troops, he took refuge in Tiberias [*e*].

Chapter VII

1. Gabara destroyed by Vespasian

(132) Vespasian's initial goal was the city of Gabara [*a*], which he took at the first assault, finding it almost without defenders. (133) Entering the town, he slew all males who were of age, but the Romans showed mercy to neither young nor old through hatred of the nation and the memory of the affront which had been done to Cestius. (134) Not content with setting fire to the city, he burnt all the hamlets and villages in the neighborhood; some of these he found completely abandoned; from the others he carried off all the inhabitants which he reduced to slavery.

2. Josephus' request for instructions

(135) Josephus by his sudden arrival produced panic in the city he had chosen as a refuge, for the people of Tiberias felt that if he had not completely written off

The Arab village of Eilabun in Galilee near Jotapata

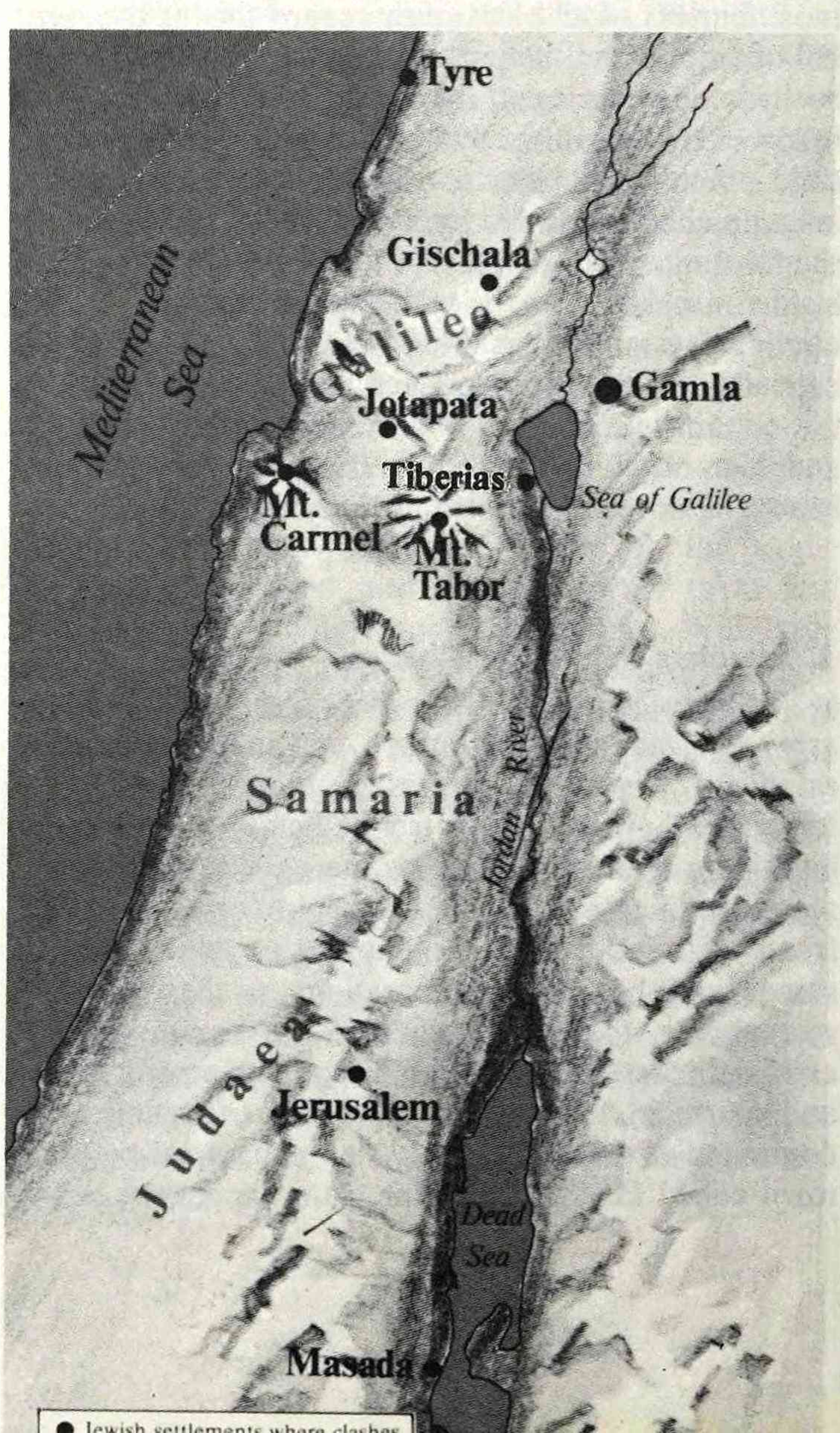
135[*b*] *Fled* The common people of Tiberias were anti-Roman, but the aristocracy, as well as Agrippa II who ruled the city, chose peace with Rome. This situation seems to be in accord with Josephus' melancholy thoughts and dejection over the poor achievements of his generalship.
141[*a*] Cf. 120[*b*].
142[*b*] Josephus slipped into Jotapata on the fifth day of its siege, approx. June 8, AD 67.
144[*c*] *Aebutius*, entrusted by Agrippa with the supervision of the Great Plain (Jezreel) south of Galilee, had already skirmished with Josephus (*Life*, 114 ff.) and was selected now on the basis of his previous acquaintance with Josephus. This, and subsequent observators (340[*c*]) seem to reflect Josephus' attempt — in retrospect — at self-justification.
146[*d*] 7 furlongs: 1.5 kms.

Roman standard-bearer

the war as hopeless, he would never have fled [*b*]. (136) In this they were perfectly right about his opinion, for he saw the inevitable catastrophe awaiting the Jews, and realized that their only hope of salvation lay in submission. (137) He himself, he felt sure, would be pardoned if he went over to the Romans, but he would have preferred to suffer a thousand deaths rather than betray his country and insolently desert the general command entrusted to him, in order to make himself at home with those he had been sent to fight. (138) He decided therefore to write for the Jerusalem authorities an exact report of the status of affairs, neither exaggerating the strength of the enemy, and so later finding himself abused as a coward, nor underrating it and thereby reviving their hopes just when they were possibly beginning to have second thoughts. (139) He suggested that if they were ready to negotiate, they should reply to that effect at once; if they decided to continue the war, they should send him a force capable of dealing with the Romans. (140) Having written a letter to this effect, he dispatched it to Jerusalem by express messengers.

C. THE EPIC OF JOTAPATA (AD 67)

3. (141) Vespasian was impatient to destroy Jotapata, having heard that most of the enemy had retired there and that it was, moreover, a strong base for them. He



therefore sent infantry and cavalry ahead to level the road leading to it, a stony mountain-track, difficult for infantry and quite impossible for cavalry [*a*]. (142) Their task was completed in four days, opening a broad highway for the army. On the fifth day, which was the twenty-first [*b*] of the month of Artemisius, Josephus hurriedly left Tiberias and slipped into Jotapata, awakening new courage in the sinking hearts of the Jews. (143) Vespasian heard the welcome news of the general's movement from a deserter, who urged him to attack the city with all speed because, if it fell, all Judaea would submit, provided Josephus fell into his hands. (144) Vespasian seized on this news as a godsend, regarding it as divine providence that the man who was considered the most able of his enemies had deliberately put his head in the noose; he instantly dispatched Placidus and the decurion Aebutius [*c*], a man of marked energy and ability, with a thousand horsemen, with orders to put a ring round the town and prevent Josephus from secretly escaping.

4. (145) Next day, Vespasian himself followed with his entire force and, marching until evening, arrived before Jotapata. (146) He led the army to the north of the town and encamped on rising ground seven furlongs [*d*] from the wall, trying to make himself as conspicuous as possible in order to intimidate the enemy. The effect upon the Jews was so immediate that no one dared to go outside the walls. (147) The Romans, after a full day's march, did not feel inclined

Roman soldiers building rising earthworks against the walls of a city in order to place their arrow- and stone-throwing engines (Trajan's Column, Rome)

150[*a*] The Jews who are said to have "encamped" outside the walls of Jotapata apparently hid themselves in various hideouts and the underbrush or hidden gullies of Mt. Atzmon and could effect surprise raids. It is doubtful whether they maintained an actual temporary camp outside the walls.

151[*b*] *Marksmen,* equipped with long-range weapons.

154[*c*] 600 wounded as against 17 dead seems an incredible proportion.

160[*a*] See diagram of the siege of Jotapata.

162[*b*] The earthworks were erected to support the *catapults* (arrow-throwing iron lances) and the stone-throwing *ballistae.* Later Roman historians reckon 55 catapults per legion. Vespasian's three legions then, would have about 160 such weapons, posted on the earthworks.

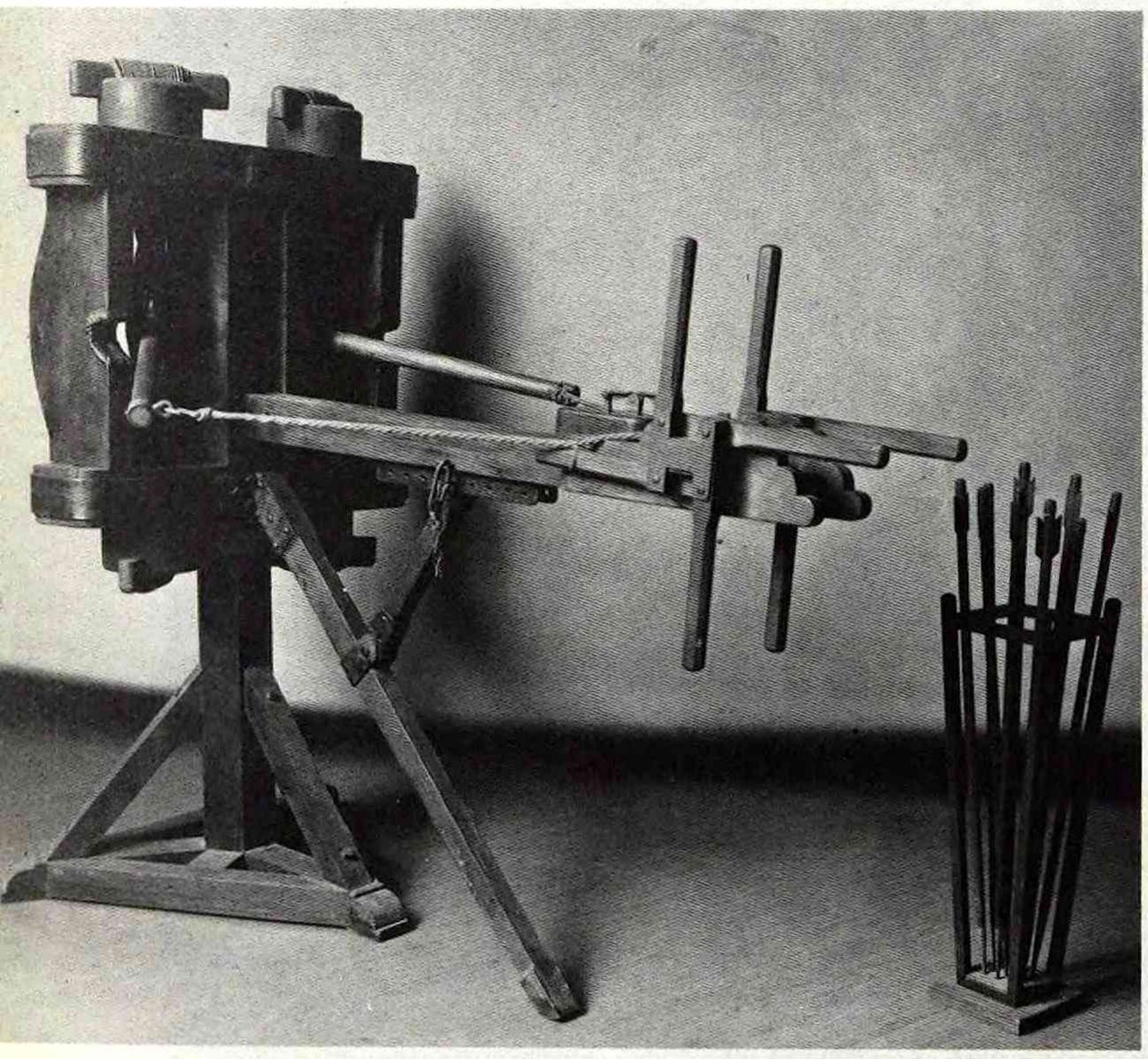
166[*a*] See 162 [*b*].

167[*b*] *Talent,* a weight of 47–48 lbs or 21.5–22 kgs.

174[*c*] 20 cubits = 9 m.

177[*a*] Other than the earthworks and firing positions which had been protected as described (cf. 170 ff. above). With a view to enforcing the blockade, the Romans had surrounded the outer circumference of the walled city with a stone dike (circumvallation) which started from the camp Vespasian had built some 1.3 kms. north of the city (cf. 146–147 above, see figure), and thereby hoped to force the Jews to surrender through hunger and particularly thirst in the hot summer days. (M. Avi-Yonah, *Carta's Atlas, Second Temple period*).

Reconstruction of a catapult. The smaller siege engine that threw heavy arrows was called catapulta, *and the larger one* ballista. *They operated in the same way as the later cross-bow. The pair of vertical coil chambers was at the front, the bow being drawn back by a windlass to the required limit of tension. The bow was released by a trigger and the bolt shot along a trough through an aperture in the front* (Virtuvius, The Ten Books on Architecture)



to attack at once; (148) but they put a double line of infantry round the town, and posted outside these a third line of cavalry, so blocking all means of exit. (149) Thus robbed of all hope of escape, the Jews were stimulated to deeds of gallantry, for in war there is nothing like necessity to rouse the fighting spirit.

5. Early fighting at Jotapata

(150) Next morning an assault was made, and those of the Jews who were encamped opposite the Romans outside the walls [*a*] stood their ground against the enemy. (151) But when Vespasian brought up his bowmen, slingers, and all his other marksmen [*b*] in full force and ordered them to shoot down these opponents, while he himself with the infantry advanced up the slope where the wall was easy to surmount, Josephus, afraid for the city, made a vigorous sortie at the head of the whole Jewish force. (152) Falling in a body on the Romans, they drove them back from the ramparts and performed many signal feats of prowess and daring. (153) However, the enemy's losses were equaled by their own; for if the Jews were emboldened by their desperate plight, the Romans were no less roused by a sense of shame; one side was armed with experience as well as strength, the other had recklessness for its armor, and had courage as its captain. (154) All day long they were locked in battle, and night alone parted them. Of the Romans a considerable number were wounded and thirteen killed. The Jewish losses were seventeen killed and six hundred wounded [*c*].

6. (155) On the following day the Romans attacked again, and the Jews, sallying out against them, offered a much more effective resistance, emboldened by their surprisingly effective resistance on the previous day. But the Romans on their side were more aggressive than before; (156) for shame put them into a blazing passion and they regarded a failure to win quickly as tantamount to defeat. (157) So for five days the Romans attacked incessantly, the garrison of Jotapata renewed their sallies, and their yet more stubborn fighting from the walls grew more and more determined; the Jews were not dismayed by the enemy's strength, nor the Romans undeterred by the difficulty of capturing the town.

7. Jotapata's strategic position

(158) Jotapata is almost entirely perched on precipitous cliffs, surrounded on three sides by ravines of such depth that when people look down into them they cannot see the abyss. The only access is from the north, where the town has been built sideways on a descending spur of the mountain, (159) and Josephus had included this slope within his wall when he fortified the city, so that the enemy could not occupy the ridge which commanded the town. (160) Screened so effectively by other mountains surrounding it, the

The pirates of Joppa (Jaffa) made raids on the traffic along the northern coast of Palestine, namely Rosh-Hanikra

The winged victory goddess Nike poised on a globe, symbolizing the heavenly sphere, the universe; from Roman remains at Ashkelon

town could not be seen until one came right up to it. Such was the strong position of Jotapata [*a*].

8. The siege

(161) Vespasian was determined to pit his strength against the natural strength of the place and the daring resistance of the Jews; he resolved to enforce the siege more vigorously and called a meeting of senior officers to plan the assault. (162) It was decided to erect earthworks [*b*] against the approachable portion of the wall, and so the whole army was sent out to collect materials. The wooded heights around the town were stripped of their trees and, along with the timber, an enormous mass of stones was piled up. (163) Then, as a screening shelter from missiles descending from above, a second party erected a line of hurdles supported by stakes, and constructed the earthworks under their shelter, suffering few if any casualties from their assailants on the ramparts. (164) Another party tore up the adjacent mounds and kept the builders constantly supplied with earth. And thus, with the men intensely engaged in three groups, not a man was idle. (165) The Jews, meanwhile, hurled great rocks and every kind of missile from the walls on the enemy's shelters; even when they failed to penetrate, the noise of the crash was so loud and frightful as to impede the workers.

9. The artillery engines at work

(166) Vespasian next set his projectile-throwers—a hundred-sixty in all [*a*]—positioned in a ring around the spot and gave instructions to bombard the defenders on the walls. (167) In a tremendous barrage the catapults shot lances into the air, and stones weighing a talent [*b*] were discharged from the stone-throwers, together with firebrands and a hail of arrows, driving the Jews not only from the ramparts, but rendering undefendable the area behind them which came within range of the missiles. (168) For a host of Arab bowmen with all the javelin-men and slingers let go simultaneously with the artillery fire. (169) The Jews, however, were by no means idle, though hemmed in their defense of the ramparts. Groups of them sallied out guerilla-like, tore away the enemy's screens and assailed the workmen, exposed as a consequence; whenever the latter fell back, they demolished the earthworks and set fire to the stakes and hurdles. (170) This went on until Vespasian realized that the lack of continuity in the earthworks was the cause of the trouble, since these gaps provided the Jews with a loophole for attack. He then linked the various shelters and simultaneously concentrated his troops, bringing the Jewish incursions to an end.

10. (171) As the earthworks were now rising and almost on a level with the battlements, Josephus thought it disgraceful that he could not devise some counter-measure to save the town; he collected stonemasons and instructed them to raise the wall higher. (172) When they protested that it was impossible to build under such a hail of missiles, he devised the following protection for them. (173) He ordered them to fix a fence to the walls and over these to stretch raw oxhides, so that when stones fired by the artillery fell on them they would be caught in their folds, while other projectiles would glance off the surface, and flaming brands would be quenched by the moisture. (174) Thus protected, the builders worked in safety, day and night, and raised the wall to a height of twenty cubits [*c*]; erected numerous towers and completed the whole with a stout parapet. (175) At this the Romans who had fancied themselves already masters of the town were greatly discouraged; the ingenuity of Josephus and the determination of the defenders amazed them.

11. A blockade ordered by Vespasian

(176) Vespasian was also exasperated at both the cleverness of this stratagem and the fearlessness of the people of Jotapata, who, (177) encouraged by their new fortification, resumed their sallies against the Romans. Daily parties of them came into conflict with the besiegers, using all the devices of guerilla warfare, pillaging everything in their path and setting fire to the rest of the besiegers' works [*a*]. (178) At length, Vespasian recalled his troops from the battle and resolved to blockade the town and starve it into surrender. (179) He reckoned that the defenders would either be reduced by lack of provisions to sue for mercy or, if they held out to the bitter end, would die of hunger. (180) He was confident, moreover, that he would overwhelm them much more easily in battle if he waited awhile and renewed his onslaught when they were exhausted. He therefore ordered that exits from the town be guarded.

12. The rationing of food and water

(181) There was plenty of grain inside as well as other necessities, except salt, but the water supply was inadequate; as there were no springs within the town, the townsfolk depended on rainwater, but little or no rain falls in the region in summer, (182) and this was precisely the season at which they were besieged; they were terribly despondent at the prospect of having nothing to drink, and chafing already as though the water supply had failed. (183) For Josephus, seeing that the town had all other necessities in abundance and that the morale of the men was high, and wishing to prolong the siege beyond the expectation of the Romans, had rationed their water from the beginning. (184) They, however, found this rationing of resources harder than actual want; unable to quench their thirst, they felt the craving the more acutely and they began to flag as if they had already reached the last extremity of thirst. (185) Their condition did not escape the notice of the Romans; from the slopes above they could see over the wall the Jews flocking to one spot to

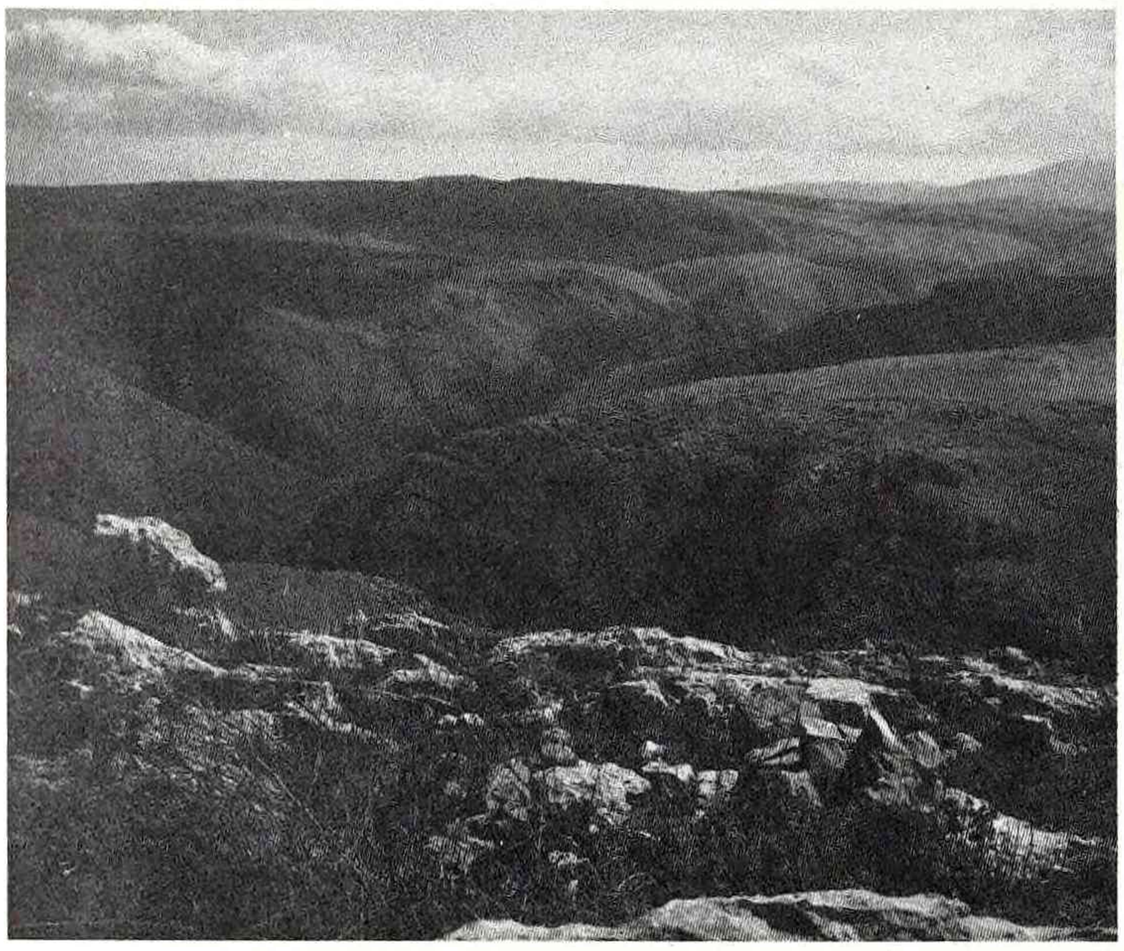
185[*b*] The catapults were also known as quick-firers.
203[*a*] *A moment of weakness and hard resolve* At this point, the author cannot hide his weakness (and this proves also that he was capable at times of owning up to his failures, the proof of which is the ingenious manner in which he describes this moment of truth). We find a parallel scene in *Life,* 210 ff.—over something related to a different situation—when Josephus also decides to fight it out in the end after hesitating for many days.
204[*b*] *Despair can be a mighty weapon* More than once Josephus makes use of the classic allusion that man can be stimulated to unsuspected acts of heroism when driven with his back to the wall; at such moments recklessness becomes his armor (as expressed previously in par. 153 above). It is probably historically valid to compare these episodes to the invincible and reckless courage of their Jewish descendants who, some two thousand years later, saved their country's independence, *Israel,* in AD 1948, with a Jewish population numbering some 650,000, and, with no arms to speak of, fought to a standstill the invasion of Arab armies from five countries, thus establishing anew the State of Israel.

receive the water rationed out to them, and so they made this spot the target for their catapults [*b*] causing serious losses.

13. (186) Vespasian hoped that before long the water in the tanks would be empty and the city be forced to surrender. (187) But Josephus, determined to shatter this hope, ordered a number of people to soak their outer garments and hang them round the battlements, so that the whole wall was suddenly running with water. (188) This caused dismay and consternation in Roman ranks as they saw all this water being wasted as a taunt by those who were presumed to lack even drinking water. The general himself despaired of capturing the town through famine, and reverted to aggressive measures. (189) Nothing could have pleased the Jews more, for they had given up hope of saving the town or themselves and preferred death in battle to death by hunger and thirst.

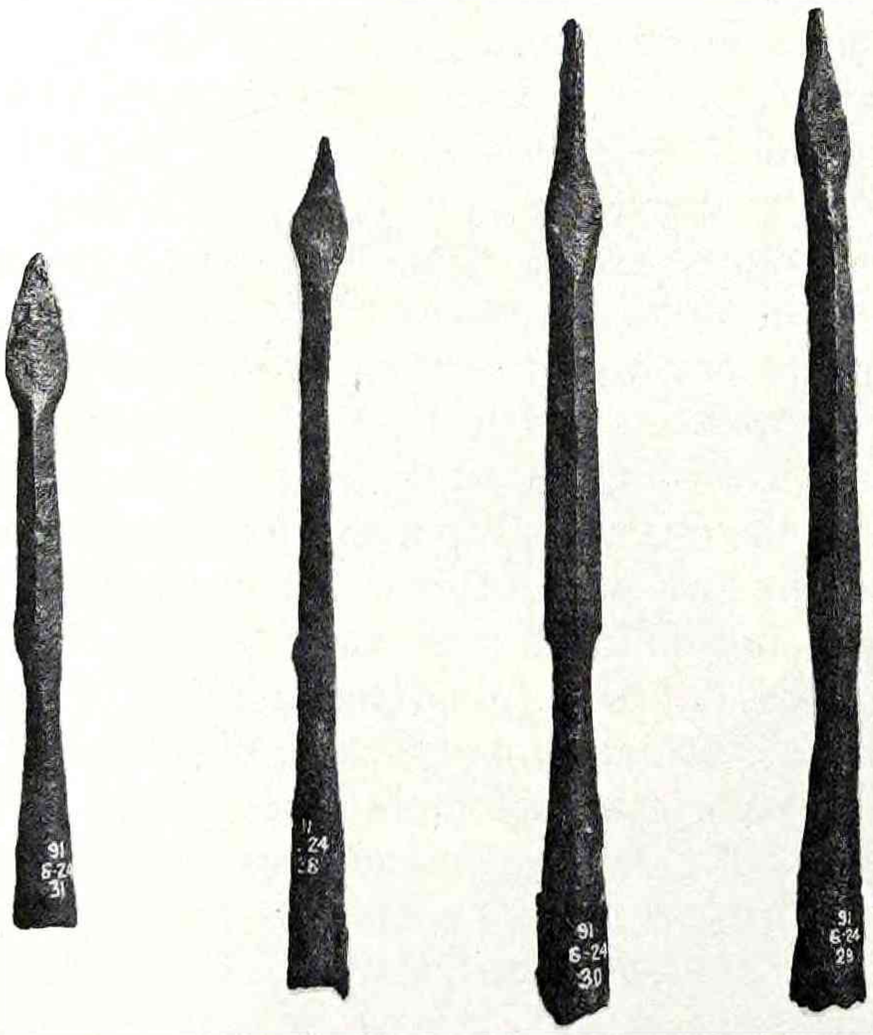
14. Obtaining supplies through a neglected gully

(190) Josephus, nevertheless, devised a second stratagem to obtain ample supplies. (191) There was an almost impassable gully, on the west side of the mountain, which was overlooked by the Roman outposts, and he succeeded in conveying letters by this route to Jews outside the city with whom he wished to communicate, and receive answers by the same messengers; (192) he used the same means to stock the

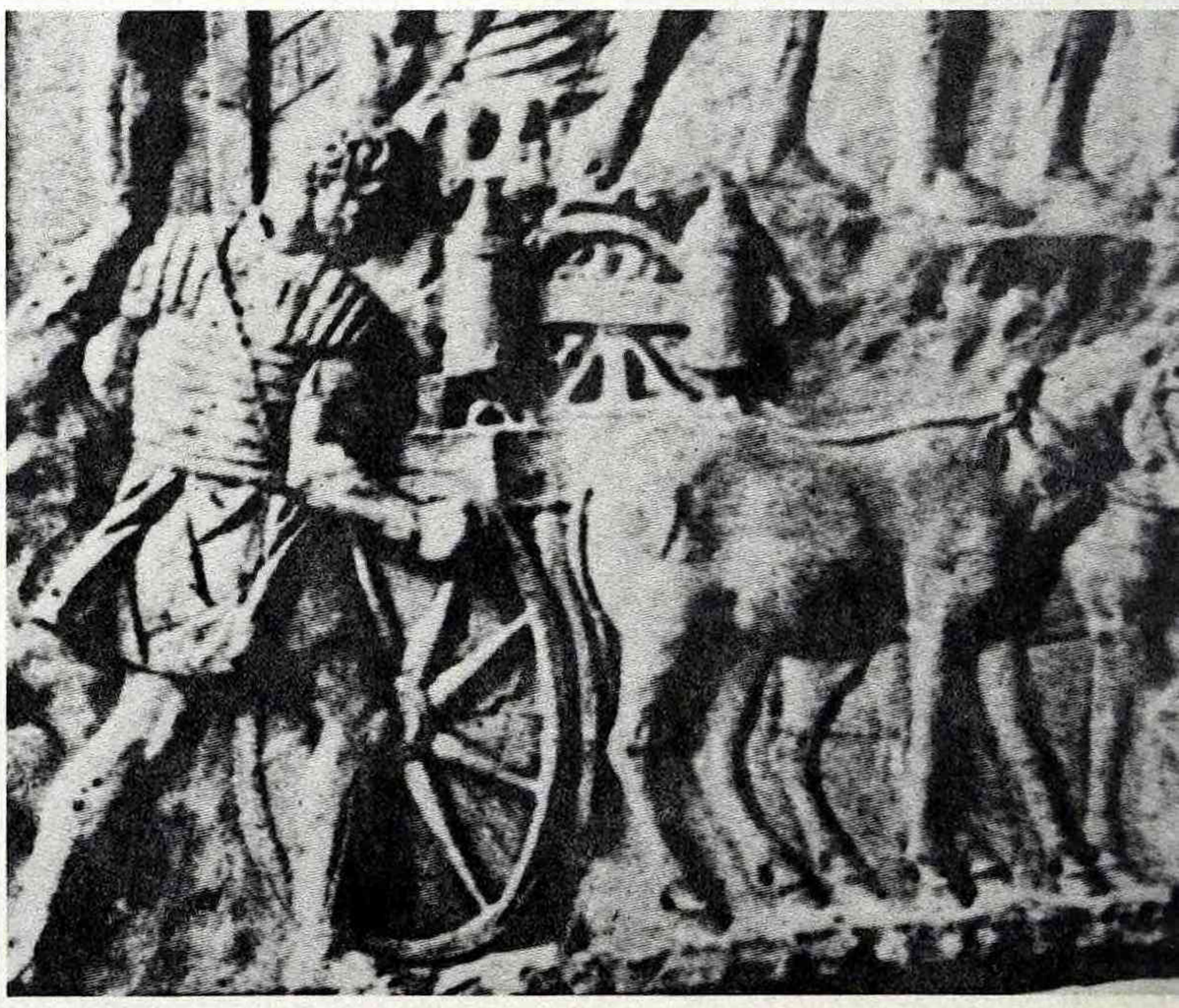


Galilean countryside near Jotapata

Long Roman arrow heads fired from a Roman catapult



A mobile field gun (carro-ballista) attached to each "century" of the legion, mounted on a cart drawn by mules and operated by two men. Its range was 300 m. They laid down a barrage of pila *(thrusting spears; Trajan's Column)*



town with necessities when they began to fail. The messengers were instructed to creep past the sentries on all fours and to wear sheepskins on their backs so that if anyone saw them at night they might be taken for dogs. But after a while the guards detected the device and blocked the gully.

15. The fight over Jotapata

(193) By now, Josephus realized that the town could not hold out any longer and that his own life would be endangered if he stayed; he consulted some of the leading citizens about the means of flight. When the people discovered his intention they crowded around him, imploring him not to forget how they depended on him alone. (194) He was the one hope of the town's survival, and if he stayed with them, everyone would put his heart into the struggle; and even if they were captured, he would be their consolation. (195) Moreover, it would be unworthy of him to run away from his enemies and abandon his friends—like a captain who leaps overboard in a storm from the ship which he had embarked in a calm. (196) His departure would wreck the town, as no one would venture to oppose the enemy anymore, if he, their only source of confidence, was gone.

16. The people's opposition to Josephus' plan

(197) Josephus, who concealed his apprehension for his own safety, assured them that it was for their own sakes he was contemplating to leave. (198) His presence in the town could give them little help if they survived; and if they fell into enemy hands he would perish with them to no purpose. (199) On the other hand, were he to escape from the siege, he could render them the greatest help from outside, for he would at once muster an army throughout Galilee, and, by a diversionary campaign, draw off the Romans from their town. (200) He failed to see how his presence at their side could save them in the present circumstances, except to spur the Romans to intensify the siege, as their chief attached so much importance to his capture. If, on the other hand, they learned that he had fled, they would greatly relax the attacks on the town. (201) Unmoved, however, by this appeal, the people were more determined to hold on to him. (202) Children, old men, women with infants in their arms threw themselves weeping before him; they embraced him and clung to his feet, they begged him, sobbing, to share their lot, not because they begrudged him his chance of escape, in my opinion, but in the hope of their own; for they felt that no disaster could befall them as long as Josephus remained on the spot.

17. Jewish counterattacks

(203) Josephus realized that if he yielded, these appeals would not go beyond supplications, but if he refused he would become suspect. Moreover, his determination to leave them was badly shaken by pity for their distress [*a*]. (204) So he made up his mind to stay, turning the general despair into a weapon for his safety [*b*]. "Now is the time," he exclaimed "to begin the fight, when there is no hope of deliverance left. It is a glorious thing to be widely acclaimed at the cost of one's life, and by some glorious exploit to fall and be remembered by future generations." (205) Suiting his actions to his words, he made a sortie with his best warriors, scattered the guards and penetrated to the Roman camp where he tore up the tents of skin under which the soldiers took shelter on the earthworks, and set fire to the works. (206) The next day and the day after he repeated his exploit, and for many days and nights he fought on indefatigably.

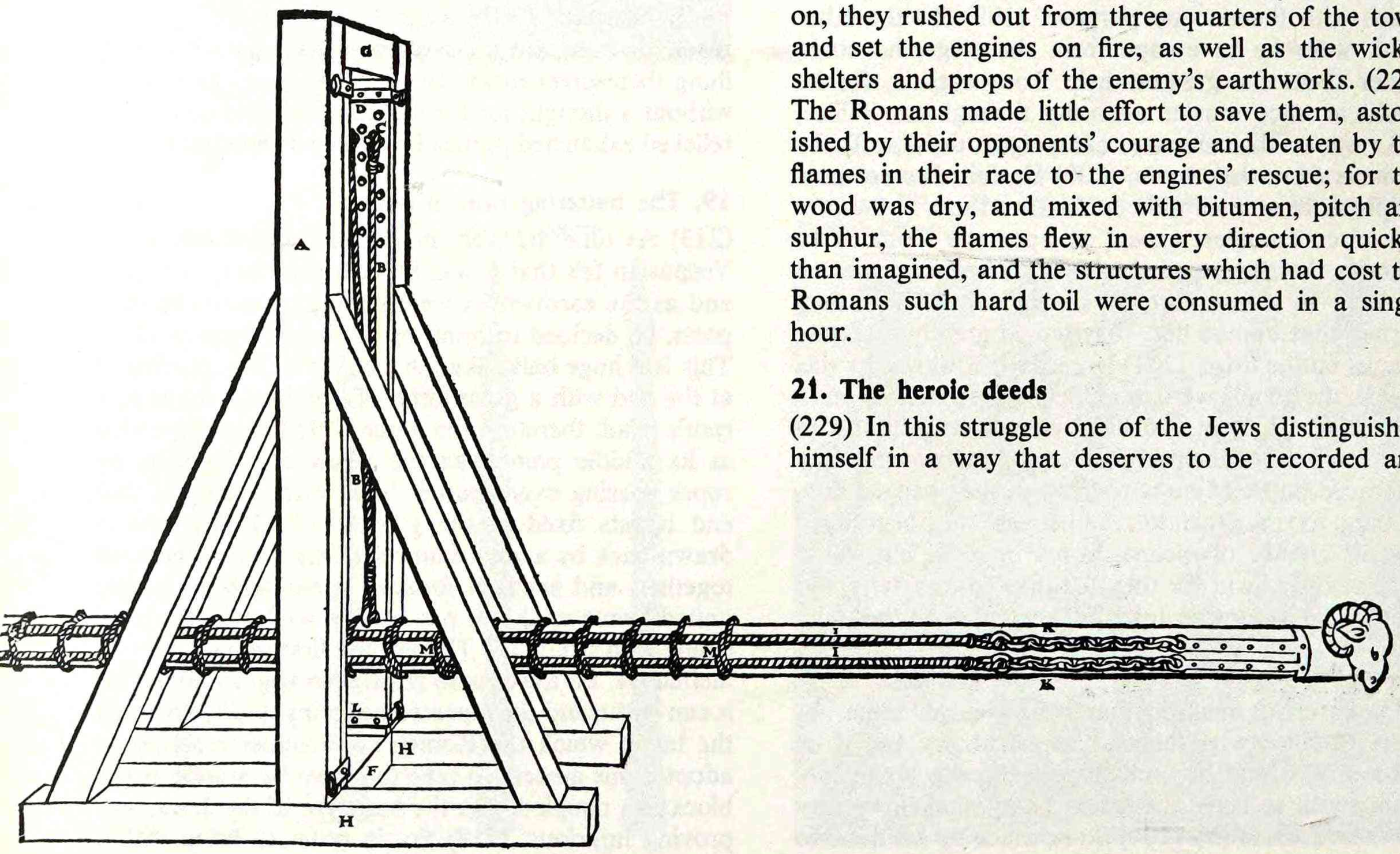
18. (207) The Romans suffered grievously from these sorties, as they were ashamed to fly before the Jews, and when they began to flee, the Romans were hampered by the weight of their own armor, while the Jews, after striking their blow, always took refuge in their town before the enemy [*c*] could retaliate. (208) Vespasian therefore ordered his legionaries to avoid such attacks and not to be drawn into an engagement with men who were bent on death. (209) "Nothing," he said, "is more redoubtable than their despair, but like a brush fire without fuel their enthusiasm will fizzle out when deprived of its target. (210) Besides, even Romans can gain their victories in safety, since they are fighting not for survival but only to enlarge their dominions." (211) Thereafter he relied mainly on his Arab bowmen and the Syrian slingers and stone-throwers to repel the Jewish onslaughts, and he kept most of his siege-engines constantly in action. (212) Badly battered, the Jews gave way, but once past the reach of their adversaries' long-range missiles, they flung themselves furiously on the Romans and fought without a thought for life and limb [*c*], and constantly relieved exhausted parties by fresh waves of attackers.

19. The battering ram in action

(213) As time dragged on and the sorties continued, Vespasian felt that it was he who was being besieged, and as the earthworks were getting close to the ramparts, he decided to bring up the battering ram. (214) This is a huge balk, like the mast of a ship, reinforced at the end with a great lump of iron in the shape of a ram's head, therefore the name. (215) It is suspended at its middle point, like the beam of a balance, by ropes passing over another balk which rests at either end bposts fixed in the ground. (216) The ram is drawn back by a great number of men, who then push together, and swing it forward again with a gigantic united heave so that it pounds the wall with the projecting iron [*d*]. (217) Though the first impact may be ineffective, no tower is so strong, no wall so thick that it can withstand the repeated battering. (218) This was the tactic which the Roman commander resolved to adopt in his anxiety to take the town by storm, as the blockade, coupled with the initiative of the Jews, was proving injurious. (219) So, in order to bring within

212[*c*] *Limb* The author returns to the same image of reckless courage.
216[*d*] See illustration of the battering ram; it had to be posted on towers or over earthworks raised close to the ramparts.
219[*e*] See illustration of a catapult.
223[*a*] *Chaff* The Romans used sacks of rags in similar circumstances. As the Jews milled their grain in town they had ample chaff to spare.
226[*b*] Such dismountable siege-engines were a regular item in the legion's equipment as we learn from a description of Vespasian's expeditionary force; cf. 121 above.

A battering ram



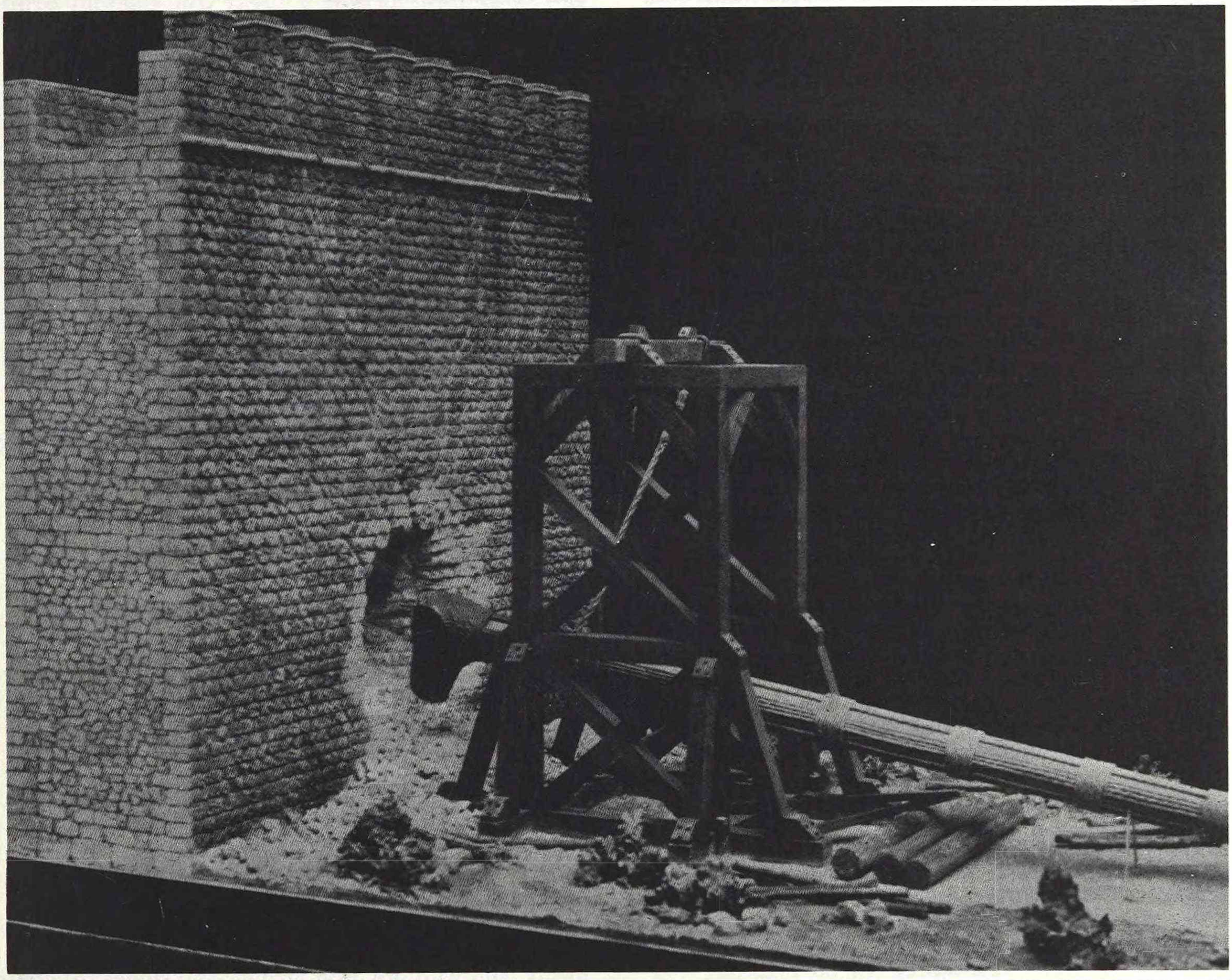
range the Jews on the ramparts who were trying to beat them off, the Romans brought forward the catapults and the other engines [*e*] and put them into action. The bowmen and the slingers moved forward simultaneously. (220) As a result, no one dared mount the rampart, and this enabled other troops to bring up the ram under the protection of a long line of hurdles, covered with skins, which safeguarded both men and their engine. (221) The very first blow rocked the wall, and piercing shrieks arose from the interior of the town, as if the town had already been captured.

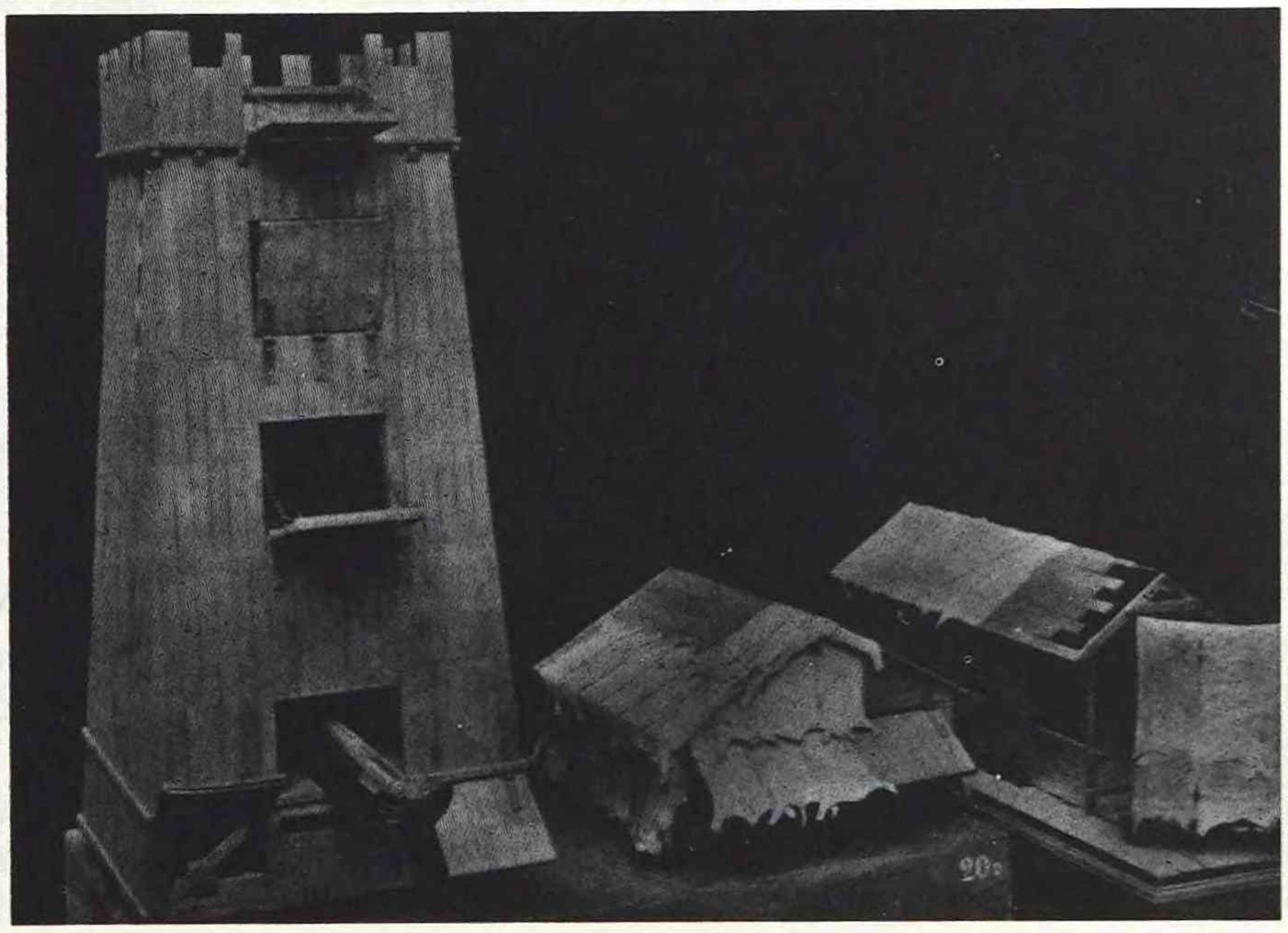
20. (222) Josephus saw that the wall was on the verge of collapsing under the relentless battering of the same spot, so he devised a scheme to counter for a while the force of the engine. (223) He ordered sacks to be filled with chaff [*a*] and he let them down by ropes to the spot where they saw that the ramming-engine was battering, so that the head would be deflected and the force of the blows cushioned by the soft sacks receiving it. (224) This tactic retarded the Romans, for to whatever spot they directed the ramming-engine, the defenders above put their sacks in the way and intercepted the strokes, and so the wall was not damaged by the impact; (225) till the Romans retaliated by a counter-device, namely, attaching scythes to the end of long poles and cutting the cords supporting the sacks. (226) The efficacy of the ramming-engine [*b*] was thus restored, and the wall, built recently, began to give way. Josephus and his comrades now had recourse to fire as a last resort. (227) Picking up all the dry wood they could lay their hands on, they rushed out from three quarters of the town and set the engines on fire, as well as the wicker shelters and props of the enemy's earthworks. (228) The Romans made little effort to save them, astonished by their opponents' courage and beaten by the flames in their race to the engines' rescue; for the wood was dry, and mixed with bitumen, pitch and sulphur, the flames flew in every direction quicker than imagined, and the structures which had cost the Romans such hard toil were consumed in a single hour.

21. The heroic deeds

(229) In this struggle one of the Jews distinguished himself in a way that deserves to be recorded and

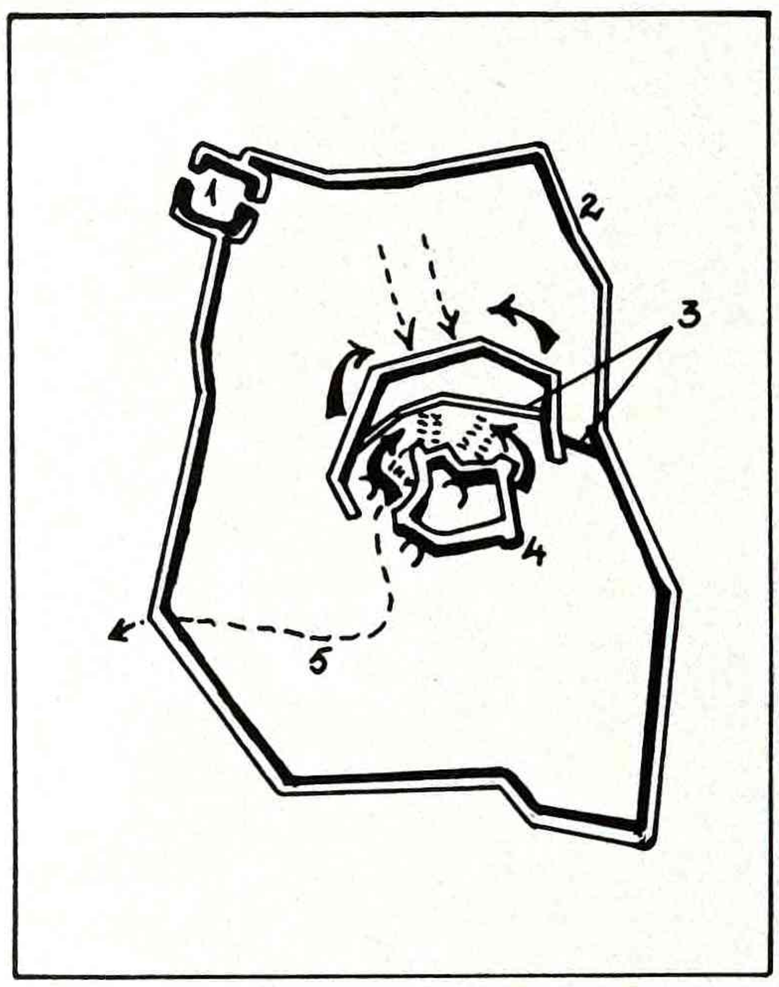
remembered. He was called Eleazar, son of Sameas, a native of Saba in Galilee. (230) He raised an enormous stone and flung it at the ram with such a force that he broke off its head. Then he leapt down, and carried it off under the nose of the enemy, bearing it with perfect composure to the foot of the ramparts. (231) A target now for all his enemies and with no armor to protect his body, he was pierced by five arrows. (232) But without a thought for these, he scaled the wall and there stood for all to admire his daring; then, writing with pain, he fell headlong still gripping the ram's head. (233) Most conspicuous for courage





The siege towers, pulled close to the besieged walls, were manned by archers and by soldiers operating the battering rams. The besiegers near the walls were protected by huts or covered with hides that reflected the arrows or boiling oil poured from the battlements (bottom)

233[*c*] *Ruma*, a few miles from Jotapata, on the south of the el-Battauf plain in Lower Galilee.
240[*a*] *Rounded stones* launched with high angle fire by the stone-projectors or *ballistae;* darts and stones were projected by catapults (cf. 242[*b*]). Such rounded stones, darts and arrowheads have been abundantly uncovered in many Palestinian sites which the Romans had besieged, such as Gamla, Masada, Herodion and Jerusalem.
242[*b*] The *engines* are the *catapultae,* mechanical contrivances which discharged multiple arrows by means of a windlass.
243[*c*] Quick-firers, or quick-loaders of missiles. Cf. 80[*b*] above.
245[*a*]–246[*a*] Three furlongs is about 603 meters and half a furlong about 100 meters; both are exaggerated figures, though the lethal effect of these bombardments struck terror in the besieged.
254[*a*] "Three groups" or possibly three deep.
258[*b*] Six leaders; also mentioned in 270 below.
262[*c*] The triple line of soldiers may have coincided with the dikes (circumvallations) which the Romans had erected at a certain distance outside the walls.



The siege of Jotapata: 1. The Roman camp. 2. First dike. 3 Second dike. 4. Jotapata. 5. Escape trail

The triumph after victory (Trajan's Column)

after him were two brothers, Netiras and Philip, also Galileans, from the village of Ruma [*c*]. They dashed out against the lines of the tenth legion and charged the Romans with such fury that they broke their lines and routed all whom they encountered.

22. Vespasian wounded

(234) Following in their wake, Josephus and the rest of the people again snatched up firebrands and set fire to the engines, shelters, and earthworks of the fifth legion and of the routed tenth. (235) The other legions hastily covered their engines and all combustile materials with earth. Towards evening they again reset the ram and dragged it to the spot where the earlier battering had weakened the wall. (236) At that moment, one of the defenders of the ramparts hit Vespasian with an arrow in the sole of his foot. The wound was slight, as the impelling effect of the shaft was weakened by the long range, but the incident created a vast commotion among the Romans; (237) the sight of blood alarmed those who stood close to Vespasian and the news at once spread through the whole army. Most of the soldiers abandoned the siege and in dismay and terror rushed to their commander. (238) The first to get there was Titus, in grave fear for his father's life, so that the troops became agitated, both because of their regard for their commander, and distress of his son. However, Vespasian without difficulty allayed his son's fears and the excitement of the army. (239) Mastering his pain, he showed himself instantly to all who were alarmed on his behalf, and roused them to yet more furious onslaughts against the Jews. Every man was eager to avenge his commander and anxious to be in the forefront of danger; and, with shouts of mutual encouragement, they dashed towards the wall.

23. (240) Josephus and his men, although falling in heaps under the barrage of missiles from the catapults and stone-throwers, still did not abandon the battlements, and with fire, iron arrows, and stones [*a*] continued to assail the soldiers, who were propelling the ram under cover of their wicker shelters. (241) But they accomplished little or nothing, and they themselves were incessantly falling, because the enemy could see them without being seen; (242) for the glare of their own fires lit them up from every side, making them a conspicuous target for the enemy as in daylight, while they found difficulty in avoiding projectiles from the engines [*b*] which they could not distinguish in the distance.

The impact of the Roman engines

(243) The force of the missiles from the "quick-firers" [*c*] and catapults was such that a single projectile ran through a row of men at the same time, and the momentum of the stones hurled by the engine tore up battlements and broke off corners of towers. (244) There is in fact no body of men so strong that it can-

not be laid low to the last man by the impact and the size of these stones. (245) Some incidents of that night can give an idea of the effectiveness of such an engine. One of the men standing near Josephus on the rampart had his head knocked off by a stone, and his skull was flung, as a stone from a sling, to a distance of three furlongs [*a*]; (246) a woman with child was struck on the belly as she was leaving her house at dawn, and the child in her womb was flung half a furlong [*a*] away; so great was the power of the stone projectors. (247) Still more terrifying than the engines was their rushing sound, and more terrifying than the missiles was the final crash. (248) Then there was the constant thudding of the dead as they dropped one after another from the wall. Fearful shrieks from the women within the town were echoed from outside by the moans of the dying victims. (249) The whole strip of ground in front of the fighting line ran with blood, and the summit of the wall could be reached over the heap of corpses. (250) The echoes from the mountains around intensified the horrible din, and on that dreadful night nothing was wanting that could horrify ear or eye. (251) Multitudes of the defenders of Jotapata fell fighting; many were wounded, and not till the time of the morning watch did the wall yield to the continual battering of the ram. (252) And then the besieged blocked the breach with their bodies and their weapons and threw up a make-shift defense before the Romans could lay scaling-gangways into position.

24. The escalade

(253) At daybreak Vespasian assembled his troops for the final assault, having allowed a brief respite after the fatigues of the night. (254) As he wished to draw off the defenders from the breach, he ordered the pick of his cavalry to dismount and ranged them in three groups [*a*] opposite the gaps in the wall; encased in armor from head to foot and with lances ready, they were to be the first to force entry into the town the moment the gangways were in position; (255) behind them he ranged the flower of his infantry; the rest of the cavalry he extended all along the slope facing the ramparts to intercept any man who might escape when the town was taken. (256) Still farther back he stationed the bowmen in a curving line, with orders to have their arrows ready to discharge; the slingers and artillerymen received similar instructions. (257) Other men were to bring up ladders and set them up against the undamaged portion of the wall, in the hope that some of the besieged, in the attempt to repel them, might be induced to abandon the defense of the breach, while the rest would be forced, by the hail of missiles, to yield.

25. Josephus' desperate tactics

(258) Josephus, aware of this design, entrusted the protection of the intact portions of the wall to the battle-weary and older men, where they would be expected to suffer no hurt; where the wall had been breached, he posted the fittest of his men, and at the head of each group six men [*b*] drawn by lot, among whom he himself drew a place [*b*] to bear the brunt of the battle. (259) He issued instructions that when the legions raised their war cry, the men were to stop their ears to avoid fear; and when the hail of arrows came, they were to bend double under the cover of their long shields and fall back a little way, until the bowmen had emptied their quivers; (260) but the instant the gangways were laid, they were to leap forward first and hurl themselves at the enemy by means of their own instruments [*b*]. "Let each man fight," he added, "not as the savior of his native place, but as its avenger, as though it were already lost. (261) Let him picture to himself the butchery of the old men, the fate of the children and the women at the mercy of the foe; seize with both hands the fury which these impending disasters arouse in your breasts, and hurl it upon the would-be perpetrators."

26. (262) Such were the dispositions Josephus made for his two divisions of defenders. But when the crowds of non-combatants, the women and children, saw the triple line that encircled the town [*c*]—for the Romans had not moved into the battle any of the guards posted earlier—and when they saw the enemy ranged, sword in hand, before the ruined walls and, above them, the slopes gleaming with arms, and the arrows of the Arab bowmen pointing downwards at them, they raised a last desperate shriek at this impending capture, as if the catastrophe was no longer a threat but was already upon them. (263) Josephus, fearing that the women's lamentations might unman the combatants, locked them in their homes, ordering them with threats to hold their tongues. (264) Then he strode up to his allotted position at the breach and, taking no notice of the ladders which were being brought up elsewhere, breathlessly awaited the coming rain of arrows.

27. The fight on the gangways

(265) At one and the same moment the trumpets of all the legions sounded together, the troops raised a terrific battle cry and, at a given signal, arrows poured from every side and darkened the sky. (266) Mindful of Josephus' instructions the men under him screened their ears from the shout and shielded their bodies from the volleys; (267) as the gangways were dropped into position, they dashed out across them, before the men who laid them down could set foot on them. (268) In the ensuing hand-to-hand fight with the enemy, they displayed remarkable prowess and fighting spirit, endeavoring in the midst of utter ruin to prove themselves not inferior to men who, with so much less at stake, were so courageous. (269) No one broke off the struggle with a Roman until he himself had fallen, or until he had killed his opponent. (270) But while the Jews were being steadily exhausted by the continuous battle and were unable to replace their front-line

298[a] *Titus' finishing touches* This courtesy was common to Jews and Romans. Joab, David's general, for instance, sent a similar message to his king at the siege of Rabbath-Ammon (II Sam. 12:26 ff).

270[a] Cf. 258.

270[b] This formation, called the tortoise or *testudo*, is illustrated (*War* II, 537 above) in Cestius' siege of Jerusalem in the preceding year.

277[a] Fenugreek or *Foenum Graecum*, grown abundantly in Palestine for fodder. It was apparently in flower at this time of the summer (cf. 282 below).

282[b] *Daesius* July, AD 67.

289[a] *Trajan* Later became emperor.

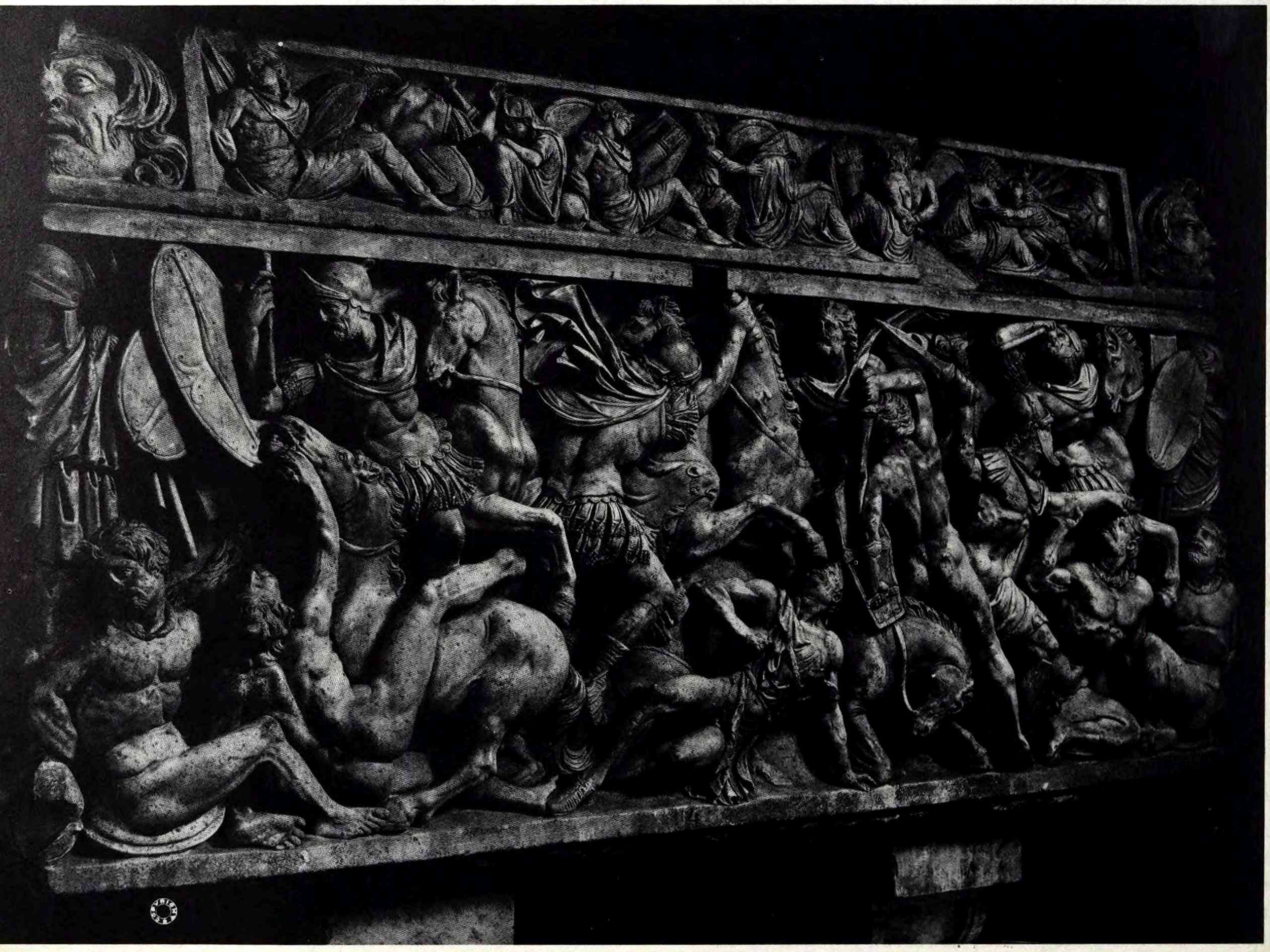
289[b] *Japha*, or modern Iafa, 3kms southwest of Nazareth and 16 kms. south of Jotapata, had been fortified by Josephus when preparing Galilee for war (*War* II, 573) and had served about that time as his headquarters (*Life*, 270). It was densely populated and well fortified. Remains of a basilica-type synagogue dating back to the third–fourth centuries AD were found there, common to synagogues of that period (which lent their shape to contemporary and later churches, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre). Its floor was decorated with a large double circle with the symbols of the 12 tribes depicted in medallions; two of them have survived.

fighters [*a*], in the Roman ranks exhausted units were relieved by fresh troops, and as soon as one group was repulsed, another instantly came forward; the attackers cheered each other on, and, standing shoulder to shoulder with their shields protecting them from above, they formed an unbreakable column [*b*] which, with the whole formation pushing as one man, forced the Jews before them and were on the point of scaling the ramparts.

28. Scalding oil poured on the Romans

(271) In this critical situation, Josephus, taught by necessity—skillful as she is to improvise when stimulated by despair—ordered boiling oil to be poured upon the soldiers under their close-locked shields. (272) As his men had it ready, many deluged the Romans simultaneously with large quantities, followed by the vessels, which were flung after, still

Hand-to-hand combat between Roman cavalrymen and Gauls (cf. War *II, 371 ff.; Capitoline Museum)*



scalding hot. (273) This broke the Roman formation. Burning and in excruciating pain, they rolled headlong from the ramparts. (274) For the oil instantly seeped under their armor from head to foot, spreading over the whole surface of their bodies, consuming their flesh as relentlessly as a flame, this liquid being, by its nature, quickly heated and slow to cool due to its fatty quality. (275) Encumbered by their cuirasses and their helmets, they could not escape from the scalding fluid. Leaping and writhing in anguish, they dropped from the scaling-bridges, while those who turned to flee were blocked by their comrades who pressed forward to the assault, thus becoming an easy target for the Jewish assailants who attacked them in the rear.

29. Another Jewish ruse

(276) The Romans, in the midst of their trials displayed no lack of fortitude, nor the Jews their ability to devise ways and means. The former, though they saw the pitiable tortures of those who had been drenched with oil, nevertheless continued their attack against those who were pouring it, each cursing the man in front of him for breaking his charge. (277) The Jews employed another ruse to trip up the advancing assailants, by pouring over the gangway-planks boiled fenugreek [*a*] on which the Romans slithered and stumbled backwards. (278) Whether trying to retire or advance, not a man could stand upright; some collapsed on their backs on the gangways and were trodden under foot; many tumbled off on the earthworks where they were pierced by the arrows of the Jews; (279) for as the Romans were tripped up, the defenders, relieved from hand-to-hand fighting, could take careful aim. (280) After sustaining severe losses in this assault, the general, toward evening, called off his troops. (281) The Romans had many dead and more wounded. The defenders of Jotapata lost only six dead, but over three hundered wounded were brought back from the battle. (282) This took place on the twentieth of Daesius [*b*].

30. (283) Vespasian at first tried to console his troops for their painful experience. (284) But when he saw that they were in a sullen mood and demanded not exhortation but action, he ordered them to raise the height of the embankments and to construct three towers, each fifty feet high, covered with sheet-iron on all four sides, so that they would be stable by their weight and rendered fire-proof. (285) He had them erected on the earthworks and mounted upon them, besides the lighter artillery, the javelin-men, bowmen, and the most powerful of the slingers. (286) These men being screened from view by the height of the towers and their breastworks, proceeded to fire upon the defenders exposed on the walls. (287) The Jews found no means to dodge the missiles launched at their heads or to avenge themselves on their invisible foes; seeing that the high towers were beyond the reach of missiles thrown by hand, and the iron that encased them was proof against fire, they abandoned the wall and sallied out against any who attempted another escalade. (288) That is how Jotapata held out, but day by day many of its defenders lost their lives, and the survivors were powerless to retaliate on the enemy; they could only block their advance at peril of their lives.

31. Japha captured by Trajan and Titus

(289) In these days, Vespasian dispatched Trajan [*a*], commander of the tenth legion, at the head of a thousand horse and two thousand foot soldiers against a town in the vicinity of Jotapata, called Japha [*b*], which had revolted, encouraged by the astonishing way in which Jotapata held out. (290) Trajan found that the city would be difficult to capture, for in addition to its naturally strong position, it was protected by a double circumvallation. However, the inhabitants came out to meet him, prepared, as he saw, for battle; he charged them, and, after a short resistance, routed them and started in pursuit. (291) They took refuge in the first enclosure, but the Romans, following on their heels, burst in with them. (292) But when the fugitives rushed on to the second wall, their own friends shut them out, fearing that the enemy would force their way in at the same time. It was God, then, who made a present to the Romans of the unfortunate Galileans; (293) it was He who at this moment allowed the population of the town to be shut out by their own people and handed them over to their murderous foes for utter destruction. (294) Vainly did the swarming crowds batter the gates and frantically appeal to the guards by their names to let them in; they were butchered in the midst of their supplications. (295) The outer wall was closed to them by the enemy, the inner wall by their friends. (296) Cooped up and huddled together between the two walls, they fell, many impaled on their comrades' swords, many on their own, while immense numbers were slaughthered by the Romans, without even having the heart to save their lives; for added to their terror of the enemy, they were heartbroken by the treachery of their friends. (297) They died cursing not the Romans but their own people, till in the end they were all killed, twelve thousand of them. (298) Trajan, assuming that the town was bereft of fighting men, or that the few who were left inside would be paralyzed by fear, decided to reserve the credit of the capture for his chief. He accordingly sent messengers to Vespasian, requesting him to send his son Titus to complete the victory [*a*]. (299) Vespasian, suspecting that some effort remained to be done, sent his son with reinforcements consisting of five hundred cavalry and a thousand infantry. (300) Titus rapidly marched to the city, drew up his forces for attack, with Trajan posted on the left wing, and himself in command of the right, and led them to the assault. (301) The soldiers brought up ladders to all sections of the wall while the Galileans, after a brief

306[*b*] *The disaster of Japha* which occurred about mid-July AD 67, stands out in sharp contrast to Jotapata's heroic defense, as related by the author. It may possibly reveal his hidden reflection that the town would have fared better had he been in command at the time.

307[*a*] *Samaritans on Mt. Gerizim* One of the biblical mountains in central Palestine, rising to 2850 ft. above sea level and towering over ancient Shechem (Tell Balata, near modern Nablus). Considered sacred, Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal were the sites where the tribes of Israel assembled under Joshua. It became, since the fifth century BC, the spiritual and visible center of the Samaritan sect, from the beginning of their split with traditional Judaism up to the present time. It was the site of their altar and temple, built as a rival temple to that in Jerusalem, and the scene of the celebration of the archaic Passover paschal sacrifice; and to this day this ceremony, as well as other festivities, still take place there. After the split with the Jews (Nehemiah 13, 18), the Samaritan historical traditions showed no further contact with Jerusalem. Their temple was destroyed by John Hyrcanus in129 BC (*Antiq.* XIII, 255) then rebuilt much later. Josephus' hatred of the Samaritans is apparent, and it appears elsewhere, mainly in *Antiq.* IX, 290 and XI, 344 ff., where he describes the stages that led to their schism with Jerusalem, though he refers it, erroneously, to the time of Alexander the Great, when the Samaritans asked to build a temple resembling that of Jerusalem. It was a similar assembly of Samaritans, armed on Mt. Gerizim, which resulted in a police action by Pontius Pilate in AD 36, a clash that led to the governor's recall. (See *Antiq.* XVIII, 85–89.) Mt. Gerizim's lower slope still preserves archaeological remains of a temple of the late bronze age at Tananir, consisting of an inner central shrine surrounded by several rooms in a large outer square, a feature common to other Canaanite shrines. The remains of what is presumed to be a later Samaritan temple were discovered at Tell-er-Ras, with signs of a staircase on the slope. It stands on a podium 3.5 m. high, covering remains of an earlier temple. Since the remains were discovered in the context of Hellenistic pottery, the earlier remains may possibly have belonged to the Samaritan temple.

307[*a*]–308[*b*] Although the Samaritans did not join the Jews in their war in AD 67, they were well armed and in readiness for eventual clashes with Jews or Romans, but they could not resist the wave of rebellion against Rome.

310[*c*] Sextus Cerealius Vettulenus.

312[*d*] The heat wave known as *shārāv* in Hebrew, *khamsīn* in Arabic, represents the most oppressive days of summer.

315[*a*] *Daesius* Approx. 15th of July, AD 67.

A Samaritan Scroll of the Law

defense on the battlements, abandoned it; (302) thereupon the troops of Titus scaled the ramparts and were immediately in possession of the town. But within the walls, where the inhabitants had rallied to oppose them, a furious struggle broke out: (303) the able-bodied men fell upon the Romans in the narrow alleys, while the women pelted them from the houses with whatever missiles they could lay their hands on. (304) For six hours the resistance was maintained; but when the more efficient combatants were killed, the rest of the population was massacred in the open and in the houses, young and old alike. For no male was left alive except infants; these, along with the women, the Romans sold as slaves. (305) The slain—those in the city, and those from the preceding engagement — amounted to fifteen thousand in all, the captives to two thousand one hundred and thirty. (306) This disaster befell the Galileans on the twenty-fifth of the month Daesius [*b*].

32. The Samaritans massacred on Mt. Gerizim

(307) The Samaritans, too, were not spared disaster. They had assembled on their sacred mountain called Gerizim [*a*], and there they stayed though they made no move; there was a threat of war in this mustering of the clan and in their militant attitude. (308) They had learned nothing from the calamities of their neighbors; in the face of the Roman successes they took a senseless pride in their own weakness and were eagerly weighing the prospect of revolt [*b*]. (309) Vespasian thought it wisest to forestall their movement and to curb their ardor, for though the whole district of Samaria was alredy garrisoned, the size and organization of the assembled was alarming. (310) He therefore dispatched Cerealius [*c*], commander of the fifth legion, to the spot with a force of six hundred cavalry and three thousand infantry. (311) This officer considered it unsafe to ascend the mountain and engage in battle, for so many of the enemy occupied the summit; so he confined himself to surrounding the whole base of Gerizim with his troops and kept strict guard all day long. (312) The Samaritans were growing short of water just at a period of a terrible heat-wave [*d*]. It was the height of summer and the multitude had not prepared essential supplies. (313) As a result several died of thirst that very day, and many, preferring slavery to such a death, deserted to the Romans. (314) From their condition Cerealius concluded that those who still held together were broken by their sufferings. He proceeded to ascend the mountain, posting his men in a circle around the enemy. At first he invited them to negotiate, urging them to save their lives and assuring them safety if they laid down their arms. (315) When his overtures were rejected, he attacked and slew them, eleven thousand six hundred in all; this was on the twenty-seventh of the month Daesius [*a*]. Such was the disaster sustained by the Samaritans.

33. The fall of Jotapata

(316) Meanwhile, the defenders of Jotapata still held out, bearing up under their sufferings beyond all expectations; but by the forty-seventh day of the siege, the Roman earthworks overtopped the wall. (317) That very day a deserter informed Vespasian of the small number and the weakness of the men who were left in the city; (318) and that, worn out by continuous watching and constant fighting, they would no longer be able to withstand a vigorous assault and might fall to a ruse if one were attempted. (319) He stated that in the last hour of the night—when they counted on some respite from their sufferings, and when exhausted men easily succumb to morning sleep—the sentries used to drop off; and that was the best time to attack, he advised the Romans. (320) Vespasian mistrusted the deserter, knowing how loyal Jews were to each other and that they were indifferent to chastisement. (321) For on a former occasion, when a man of Jotapata had been captured, he had held out under every variety of torture, and even the ordeal by fire, refusing to say a word about conditions in the town; and, finally crucified, met death with a smile. (322) However, the plausibility of the story made the traitor credible, and thinking that the man might be telling the truth, and that he would suffer no great harm if this were a ruse and he acted upon it, Vespasian ordered him to be closely guarded but got his army ready to capture the town.

34. (323) At the hour indicated they advanced silently to the walls. (324) The first to climb up was Titus, accompanied by one of the tribunes, Domitius Sabinus, and followed by a few men from the fifteenth legion. (325) They quickly killed the sentries and entered the town. In their rear came Sextus Calvarius, a tribune, and Placidus with the units they commanded. (326) The citadel had been captured, the enemy was at large in the midst of the town, and it was broad daylight before the vanquished defenders were aware of the capture! (327) For most of them were worn with fatigue and fast asleep; if anyone woke he could not see, because a thick mist which enveloped the city at that time obscured his vision. (328) At last, when the whole army had poured in, they got up, only to realize that all was lost; the onset of the massacre brought home the realization that Jotapata had fallen. (329) The Romans, remembering what they had borne throughout the siege, showed no mercy nor pity for anyone. They thrust the people down the steep slope from the citadel and massacred them. (330) Even those still able to fight were deprived of the means of defense by the difficult ground; crushed in the narrow alleys and slipping down the steep face, they were swamped by the wave of carnage sweeping down from the citadel. (331) Many committed suicide, even of Josephus' picked men, for when they saw that they could not slay a single Roman, they made sure at least to forestall death at Roman hands, and, gathering at the edge of the town, they killed themselves.

The Samaritans' temple on Mount Gerizim was the scene of their annual Passover sacrifices. This is still celebrated in the same fashion by their few surviving descendants, featuring the slaughtering and roasting of lambs in the fire-pits, the genuflections, blessings and hymns

332[*b*] The Romans' position was strategically more favorable north of the town (cf. 158, 161–162), and they finally entered from that direction.

337[*a*] The number of prisoners taken is out of proportion to the claimed 40,000 killed—an obvious exaggeration—though the prolonged fighting during 47 days was apparently waged by about 10,000 combatants.

339[*b*] *Panemus* 20th of July, AD 67.

340[*c*] The author refers to himself with some complacency as one of the main pillars of the national defense. This is understandable, though it is not the objective truth. We learn from subsequent chapters that his defeat did not represent the decisive factor in the war with Rome.

341[*a*] *Broad cave* They slid into an apparently dried-up reservoir dug in the rock, known only to the natives.

344[*b*] Paulinus was probably a friend of Vespasian and later a governor in Gaul.

347[*c*] *Vanquished* Nicanor was a familiar figure and had apparently served under King Agrippa II, and was thus known to Josephus. Apparently he was not regarded with great mistrust by many people in Jerusalem. The "innate generosity of the Romans" proclaimed by Nicanor seems incongruous in the general context, for one encounters, throughout *Wars*, the brutalities that characterized the Romans' treatment of wholly innocent Jews in many places (besides combatants and prisoners), as well as the shocking atrocities committed by them on peaceful Jews during the war and afterwards. Other sections of Josephus offer a true witness to the character of the Romans and their contemporaries.

352[*a*] *Dreams* In the eyes of the common people, priests (such as Josephus) were likely to possess a more profound understanding of the mystery of dreams, because of their training and intimate contact with holy objects and rites; this may have been due to their strict observance of the laws of purity and the blessings they pronounced in the community on behalf of the deity. Josephus' interest in dreams is illustrated above (*War* II, 112–116). He relates in *Life* 208. f. that a good dream he interpreted at a critical moment of his governorship in Galilee had given him considerable encouragement. Josephus's quotation of the nocturnal dreams remains one of the mysteries of his narrative. He was obviously beset by such fears in his wakeful hours as well.

356[*b*] The compelling nature of the "laws of our fathers," derived from hallowed traditions, prescribed that one should rather renounce life than infringe on God's sacred commandments and, under stress of holy war, combatants should rather lay down their lives than buckle under the hateful pagan Roman rule.

363 to 382[*a*] *Josephus' speech on suicide* strikes one as an unnecessary example of deceptively subtle reasoning—intended, perhaps, to impress his non-Jewish readers—but seemingly inappropriate at this moment of sheer terror; for it bore no real relationship to the alternatives his companions faced, namely, to die for their beliefs rather than become Roman slaves. This is why his speech has struck so many readers and critics as unconvincing and beside the point, though the author tried hard to link the dilemma of the embattled companions with the horrendous thought of suicide, which is flatly condemned by Jews. But his audience was not convinced. In any case, the laws of the Mishna on the subject would not condemn suicides which occurred under the present stressful circumstances of such a crisis (cf. 374–375 [*a*]). Though deliberate self-destruction is regarded by Judaism as a crime equivalent to murder, it was realized that most suicides result from mental imbalance, and that some could not be condemned at all. In AD 74 the garrison of Masada (*War* VII, 304–406) killed themselves rather than be taken by the Romans, while in the Middle Ages Jews killed themselves to avoid falling into Christian hands. Except when the action was the result of mental disturbances, the suicide was buried in a plot reserved at the side of the cemetery (cf. 391 [*c*]).

35. Death of the last remnants

(332) Those sentries, who first realized that the town was taken, had escaped in time and took refuge in one of the northern towers where they held their own for some time [*b*]; but when they were surrounded by a large enemy force they at last surrendered and cheerfully offered their throats to their opponents. (333) The Romans might well have boasted that the final stage of the siege had been a bloodless victory, if one of them, the centurion Antonius, had not fallen at the time of the capture. He was killed by a trick. (334) One of the many fugitives who had taken refuge in the caves begged Antonius to extend his hand to him as a pledge of protection and help him climb out; (335) the centurion incautiously complied, and immediately the man stabbed from below with his spear beneath the groin, and killed him instantly.

36. (336) On that they the Romans massacred all who appeared in the open; in the next few says they searched the hiding-places and wreaked their vengeance on all who hid in subterranean vaults and caves, sparing none, regardless of their age, except women and infants. (337) The prisoners thus collected were twelve hundred, while the total number of the dead, including those killed in the battles in previous combats and the final assault, was reckoned at forty thousand [*a*]. (338) Vespasian ordered the city to be demolished and had all of its strongholds burnt down to the ground. (339) Thus was Jotapata captured in the thirteenth year of the reign of Nero, on the new moon of Panemus [*b*].

D. JOSEPHUS' ESCAPE

Chapter VIII

1. His hiding place

(340) The Romans then instituted a search for Josephus, due to their own resentment and the express desire of the general, who considered that the war would be virtually over once Josephus was in his hands [*c*]. So they closely examined the dead bodies and the men who had gone into hiding. (341) But when the city was on the point of being captured, Josephus, helped by some divine providence, had stolen away from the midst of the enemy and jumped into a deep pit, giving access on one side to a broad cave [*a*] which was invisible from above. (342) There he found forty persons of importance hiding with a supply of provisions that would last for many days. (343) During the daytime he lay hidden, since the enemy was occupying every quarter of the town, but at night he came out to look for an escape route and reconnoiter the sentries; but as every avenue was blocked on his account and there was no means of eluding detection, he went down again into his cave.

(344) So for two days he escaped, but on the third a woman of his party was captured and betrayed his secret; Vespasian immediately sent two tribunes, Paulinus [*b*] and Gallicanus, with orders to offer Josephus safe conduct and persuade him to come out.

2. Parleying with Roman officers

(345) When they arrived they urged him to do so and pledged themselves for his safety, but could not persuade him. (346) His suspicions were based not on the character of the envoys—which was civilized—but on the consciousness of all he had done and the feeling that he must suffer proportionately. The fear that he was being summoned to punishment persisted until Vespasian sent a third tribune, Nicanor, a friend and an old acquaintance of Josephus. (347) On his arrival he emphasized that the Romans were usually merciful toward the vanquished [*c*], and that Josephus' heroic deeds made him admired rather than hated by the commanding officers; (348) the commander-in-chief was anxious to bring him out, not for punishment—he could inflict that even if Josephus did not come forth—but because he preferred to save such a brave man. (349) He added that if Vespasian had intended to lay a trap, he would not have sent a friend, thus using friendship—the finest virtue—as a cloak for perfidy, the foulest crime, and he, himself would never have agreed to come if he had been required to deceive a friend.

3. (350) In spite of Nicanor's assurances Josephus still hesitated. Meanwhile, the soldiers in their fury attempted to set fire to the cave, but were restrained by their commander, who was eager to take him alive. (351) But as Nicanor urged his appeals, and Josephus overheard the threats of the hostile crowd, the memory came back to him of the nocturnal dreams in which God had foretold him of the Jews' impending fate and the fortunes of the coming Roman emperors. (352) He was an interpreter of dreams [*a*] and skilled in divining the obscure utterances of the Deity [*a*]; being a priest himself and of priestly descent, he was familiar with the prophecies in Holy Scriptures. (353) At this very moment he was inspired to understand their meaning and, seizing on the terrifying images of his recent dreams, he offered a silent prayer to God: (354) "Since it pleases you," so it ran, "to break the Jewish people whom you created; since all fortune has passed to the Romans; and since you chose my spirit to make known the things that are to come, I willingly surrender to the Romans that I may live; but I call upon you as witness that I go, not as a traitor, but as your minister."

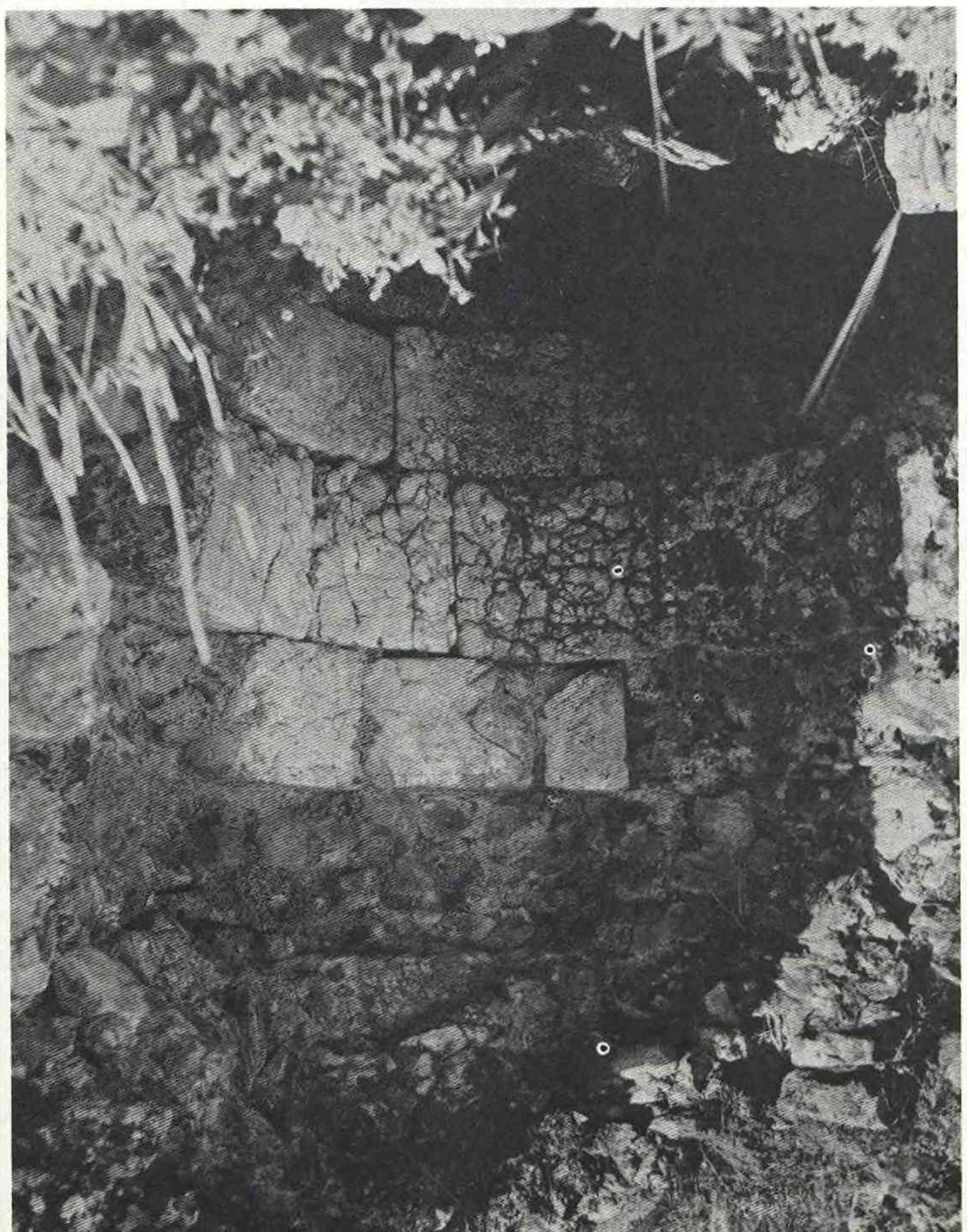
4. Josephus' surrender opposed by his companions

(355) Saying this, he was on the point of surrendering to Nicanor; but when the Jews who had shared his refuge realized that he was yielding to the invitation, they crowded around him shouting, (356) "Well might the laws of our fathers groan aloud and God himself hide his face for sorrow—God who endowed Jews with spirits that despise death [*b*]! (357) Is life so dear to you, Josephus, that you can bear to live as a slave? How quickly have you forgotten yourself! How many have you persuaded to lay down their lives for liberty! (358) Utterly false, then, was your reputation for bravery and your reputation for shrewdness, if you can hope to be spared by those whom you have fought so bitterly; or even supposing that they grant you a pardon, if you lower yourself to accept it! (359) No, if the fortune of the Romans has made you forget yourself, the honor of our country devolves on us! We will lend you a right hand and a sword. If you die willingly, you will have died as general of the Jews; if unwillingly, as a traitor." (360) As they said this, they pointed their swords at him and threatened to run him through if he surrended to the Romans.

5. Josephus' dissertation on the crime of suicide

(361) Fearing an assault and believing that it would be a betrayal of God's commands if he died before imparting his message, Josephus, in this critical situation proceeded to philosophize: (362) "What, comrades," he said, "is this thirst for our own destruction? Why should we separate body and soul, who are so fond of one another? One of you suggests that I am a changed man; (363) well the Romans know the truth about that. Another says 'It is an honorable thing to die in war.' Quite so! But by the laws of war—namely, by the hand of the conqueror. (364) If I am shrinking from the sword of the Romans, I should fully deserve to die by my own sword and by my own hand; but if they want to spare an enemy, are we not more justified in sparing ourselves? (365) It would be folly to inflict

Pits and ancient reservoirs such as the one—reminiscent of Josephus' hideout—come to light in Galilee



375[*b*] *Suicide* This is borne out by Josephus' statement in his *Contra Apion* II, 218 "To those who observe the laws and, if they must die for them, willingly meet death, God has granted a renewed existence, and in the revolutions of the ages, the gift of a better life" (namely, the afterlife, which Josephus, as a Pharisee, believed in, along with most Jews). Consequently, it seems incredible that his companions would have tolerated deceptively subtle reasoning on suicide, in the atmosphere of terror, fury and serious doubts about their own commander.

377[*c*] *Normal burial* The author's reference to the punishment of a suicide, as described (being exposed, unburied, etc.) is not supported by Talmudic literature, which reflects the customs of the day, nor is such punishment sanctioned in Biblical laws and procedures (Deuteronomy 20, 22 f.). Reporting such rhetorical addresses, however, was a consistent conceit of ancient historians, and the actual thoughts expressed reflect later editing rather than what was actually said at the time.

378[*d*] Severing the hand is an Athenian custom, but seems to have been introduced into the speech by the author's Greek assistants in the course of its translation from the original.

387[*a*] *His gamble with life* Josephus's stratagem was a dangerous gamble, but he was capable of daring deeds when he was cornered (witness his shocking adventure at Tarichaea, *War* II, 598 ff.).

389[*b*] *And escape* It is strange that his companions were ready to act upon his suggestion to slay each other in accordance with the established customs, and not to fall into the hands of the enemy.

391[*c*] *By fortune or divine providence* This entire episode has received a most intensive examination by readers and scholars for the last two thousand years. Josephus lovers and Josephus loathers, whose opinions are recorded in overwhelming detail, have still not cast a decisive verdict, and no one may ever know how the die was cast in that cave in the end, and whether he survived by trickery on his part. The odds against Josephus being one of the final two survivors would be twenty-to-one in an uncontrolled casting of lots. Perhaps, as general, he supervised the drawing. One can find inconsistencies in some of his other autobiographical details.

391[*d*] *Remain alive: The sincerity of Josephus' "philosophical" reasoning after the fall of Jotapata* J. N. Simhoni in the Introduction to his Hebrew version of *War* has added an interesting comment on Josephus' *moment of truth* when he delivered his arguments to the companions who hid in the cave with him—and his quick wits in cheating fate. This was a frightful experience as the protagonists deliberated over the dreadful dilemma of life, death and the afterlife. *Where did truth lie?* "Josephus realized that the dream of freedom and divine redemption had vanished; that all the sacrifices of the people had been in vain; that God had forsaken the Jewish defense forces and hastened the enemy's ruthless progress, while he himself was like a leaf shed from the branch for he had been cast out of the ranks of the fighters for freedom... He had a chance to survive if he surrendered, while his companions chose death when everything was lost. It was then that a deep intellectual conflict arose with these innocent-minded people, as they felt that life had lost its meaning and they surrendered to fate. He, on the other hand, sensed an unsuspected 'power of prophecy' arising in him and he chose life... That is when he liberated himself from the social and national 'musts' of his environment, when he saw that he had been called to a higher and better fate. 'God's call' had obliged him (in accordance with his prophetic sense) to choose life and he could not die before fulfilling his sacred obligations and revealing them to future generations. This was the essence of his 'philosophical' rationalization on life expressed to his companions, who were unable to appreciate it. He embodied in this self-defense none other than a confession of faith, while he did not try to hide behind any subterfuge... The brilliant writer that he was, he realized that innocent-minded readers of his book would not agree, and that he would be condemned... Nevertheless, he believed in his own sense of justice... though the price he had to pay was his *honor*. But honor is relative to time and circumstance, and it is rated differently according to the meaning modern people attach to it. In any case, he felt that the Zealots had committed the nation to self-destruction, and history justified his prediction. In sum, his rationalization cannot be regarded as *objective truth;* but it was Josephus' *psychological truth*. History, on the other hand, has also added its comment through the preservation of this monumental and faithful historical record."

on ourselves the treatment which we want to prevent by our quarrel with them! Another says, 'It is honorable to die for freedom.' I say so too, but on condition that one dies fighting and at the hands of those who are trying to rob us of our freedom. But now they are neither coming to fight us nor to kill us. It is equally cowardly not to want to die when one is caught, as to wish to die when one ought not. (366) What prevents us from surrendering to the Romans? Is it not fear of death? (367) And shall we then inflict certain death upon ourselves, because we fear possible death at the hands of our enemies? (368) 'No, it is fear of slavery,' I will be told, As though we are free men now! 'It is noble to kill oneself,' another will declare. Not at all, I say; it is most ignoble. I think there is no greater coward than the captain who, fearing the stormy sea, deliberately sinks his ship before the tempest. (369) No; suicide is equally repugnant to the instincts shared by all living creatures, and a real act of impiety towards God who created us. (370) Among all the animals there is not one that deliberately seeks death or kills itself; the will to live is a powerful law of nature rooted in all. That is why we regard as enemies those who openly attempt to take our lives and punish as assassins those who clandestinely try to do so. (371) And do you not think that God is indignant when a man treats His gift with contempt? For it is from Him that we have received our being, and it is to Him we must leave the descision to take it away. (372) All of us, it is true, have mortal bodies, fashioned of perishable matter; but the soul is immortal forever, part of God dwelling in our bodies. A man who takes off with a deposit entrusted to his care by a fellowman, or abuses it, is judged as an unworthy villain. If, then, a man casts out of his own body the deposit which God has entrusted to his keeping, how can he hope to elude Him whom he has wronged? (373) It is considered right to punish a runaway slave, even if the master he is leaving is a rogue; and shall we fly from God—the best of masters—and not be judged impious? (374) Don't you know that those who depart this life according to the law of nature and repay the loan they receive from God—at such time as he who lent it chooses to reclaim it—win eternal glory? That their homes and families are secure, and that their souls, remaining spotless and obedient, are allotted the holiest place in heaven, and when the wheel of time has turned full circle, they return to find a new habitation in unsullied bodies! (375) But if men go mad and lay hands upon themselves [*b*], the darker sections of the nether regions receive their souls into the shadows and God, their father, visits the sins of the father upon their children (376). That is why this crime, so hateful to God, is punished by the sagest of legislators. (377) With us it is ordained that those who commit suicide should be exposed unburied until sunset, although it is thought right to give normal burial [*c*] even to our enemies slain in war. (378) In other lands the law re-

quires that a suicide's right hand, with which he made war on himself, should be cut off, on the ground that, as the body was unnaturally severed from the soul, so the hand must be severed from the body [*d*]. (379) We are therefore bound, my friends, to listen to reason and not to add to our human calamities the crime of impiety towards our creator. (380) If life is offered to us, let us live: for this offer brings no discredit if it comes from those who have had so many proofs of our valor; if they choose to kill us, death at the hands of our conquerors is honorable. (381) But for my part, I shall not pass over to the enemy's side in order to be a traitor to myself; if I did, I should be far more senseless than those who desert to the enemy, for while they do it for safety, I would be consciously going to my own destruction. (382) However, I pray that the Romans may prove faithless if, after giving me their word, they put me to death, I shall die content and find in the broken faith of the perjurers a consolation better than a victory [*a*]."

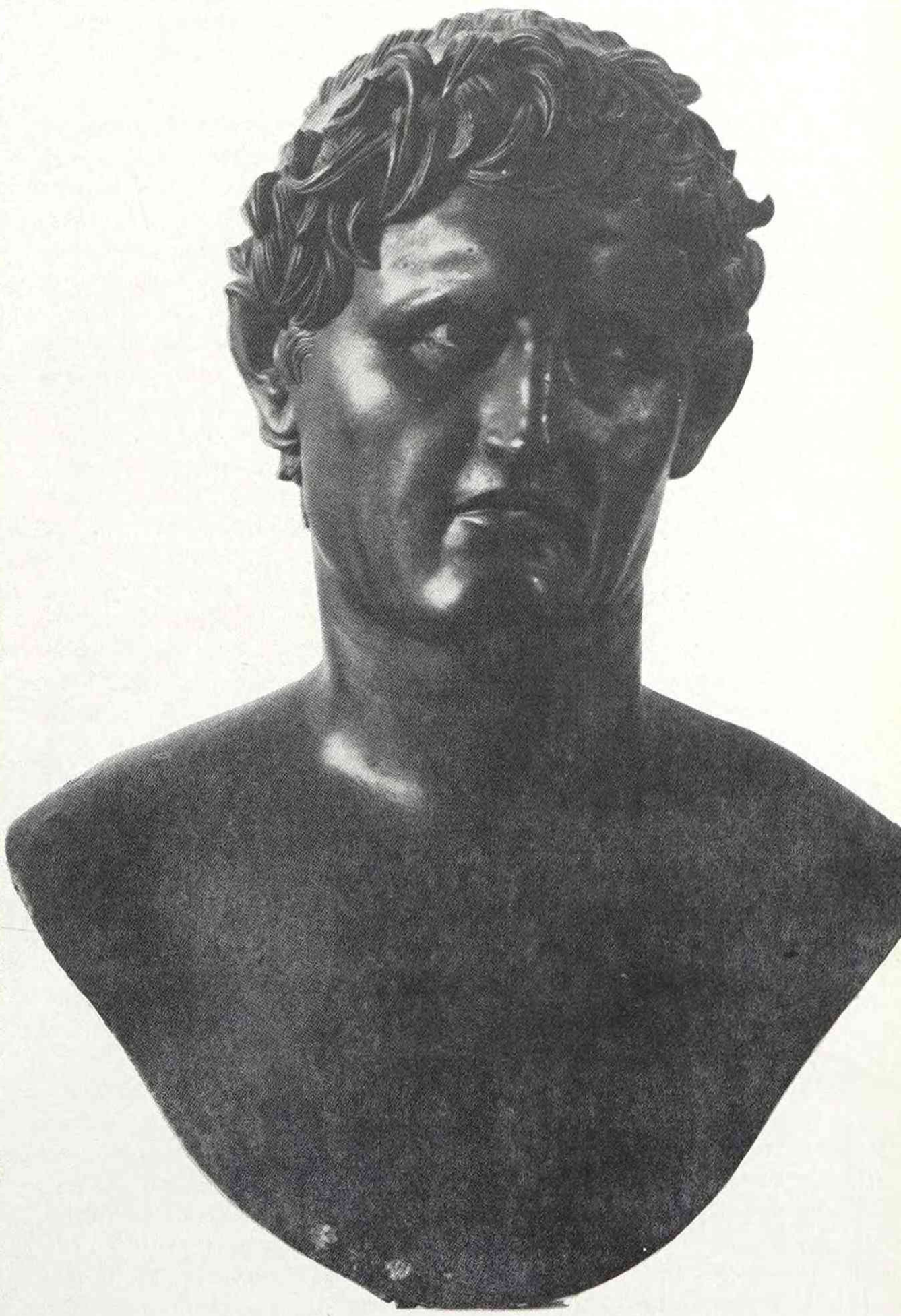
6. His life in danger

(383) By these and many similar arguments Josephus tried to deter his companions from suicide. (384) But desperation made his hearers deaf; they had long ago devoted themselves to death, and now they were infuriated at him, running at him from all directions, sword in hand, upbraiding him for cowardice, each one seeming on the point of striking him. (385) But he, addressing one by name, fixing another with his general's glare, clasping the hand of a third, shaming a fourth by his entreaties, and torn by conflicting emotions at this critical moment, succeeded in keeping all their swords away from his throat, turning like an animal surrounded by the hunters to face one assailant after another. But even when he was at the final moment, they still held their general in respect; (386) their hands were enfeebled, their swords glanced off him, and many, while thrusting at him, spontaneously dropped their weapons.

7. Group suicide by Josephus' companions; his escape

(387) But in this predicament, his resourcefulness did not forsake him [*a*]. Trusting to God's protection, he hazarded his life on one last throw, saying: (388) "As we are resolved to die, come, let us draw lots and decide the order in which we are all to kill each other in turn. (389) Whoever draws the first lot shall die by the hand of him who comes next; luck will thus take its course down the whole line. In this way we shall be spared taking our lives in our own hands. For it would be unfair when the rest were gone if one man should change his mind and escape [*b*]." This proposal inspired assurance; his advice was taken, and he drew lots with the rest. (390) Each man in turn offered his throat for the next man to cut, in the belief that his general would immediately share his fate; they thought death together with Josephus sweeter than life. (391) He, however—should we say by fortune or by divine providence [*c*]—was left with one other man; and, anxious neither to be condemned by the lot, nor, if he were left as the last, to stain his hand with the blood of a fellow countryman, he persuaded this man also, under a pact, to remain alive [*d*].

Roman officer in Vespasian's entourage



396–398[*a*] *Josephus as prisoner in Vespasian's camp* The author idealizes his status as a prisoner. It was apparently Vespasian's intentions to have him taken as a prisoner to Rome, to be tried by the emperor, and put to death before the people of Rome; this was a sign of a great victory, in line with time-honored precedents (cf. Cumanus' dispatch of rebels, *War* II, 243 f., or the case of Paul of Tarsus, at his own appeal, *Acts* 25, 11 f.). But Josephus may have impressed the young Titus, then 19 years old, and, through him, other officers and his father; in the end, he was kept prisoner in camp for the duration of the war; and Vespasian, in his dispatch to Nero, may not have described Josephus' capture as the crucial event of the war. From then on, Josephus watched every turn of events and seized on it to improve his lot, as appears from subsequent developments in the Roman camp (cf. 408 [*d*] below).

401[*a*] There is a missing portion [Nero and] in the text at this point, and most authorities agree, from the context, that the missing words refer specifically to Nero and his successors.

404[*b*] *Omens and oracles* were taken seriously by Romans (Tacitus, *Historiae* I, 10, II, 4, 78; Suetonius *Vesp.* 4). On a former occasion when Sabinus, Vespasian's father, consulted the oracle, he found through inspection of the liver of a sacrificed animal that Vespasian would become Caesar; a tree once collapsed suddenly on their estate, then, supposedly, rose and grew green leaves as before; another time, when Vespasian was in Achaea, Greece, with Nero, he dreamed that if one of the emperor's teeth were uprooted, luck would befall the Flavii, and it so happened that the next day Nero's physician showed Vespasian a tooth he had removed from the emperor's mouth.

406[*c*] There is some substance to Josephus' prediction that the city would fall, as shown by his statement to the people in para, 353–354. He may have regarded the defense of Jotapata as a struggle of despair intended mainly to give up the town only at the expense of a considerable number of Roman lives.

407[*d*]–408 [*d*] *A historical interpretation of Josephus' "prophecy"* His version is very surprising, for the Talmud relates a similar story about Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai on the occasion of his escape from the siege of Jerusalem not so long afterwards. This should cause no wonder since both Josephus and ben Zakkai were pacifists at heart and could express their feelings when a propitious moment arose: in Josephus' case, through his awareness of what now surrounded him, and in the Rabbi's case, through his wise summing-up of the national situation before the fall of Jerusalem. In A. Schalit's opinion, "there is some substance in both accounts. Presumably, under no circumstances would Josephus have dared so boldly to misrepresent the truth had the story been a complete fabrication, since *War* was written later under the emperor's patronage and its contents sanctioned by the imperial dynasty. Vespasian would hardly have gone along with the prediction had it not contained a kernel of truth, which led him to accept the fictitious element in the story as well. The main falsehood was that the "prophecy" was not made by Josephus when he appeared as a captive before Vespasian... Josephus was held prisoner in the camp for the duration of the Judaean campaign until the news was received of Nero's death (AD 69). This information caused a stir in Vespasian's camp and the excitement increased greatly when word was heard of the death of Galba (*War* IV, 499 f., AD 69) who had been proclaimed emperor. The officers and troops began to entertain the idea of appointing an emperor of their own. Actually, Josephus exploited the circumstances surrounding Nero's death to his own advantage, shrewdly perceiving it as an opportunity for obtaining his freedom—and perhaps more—if only he was able to make proper use of the favorable turn of events. He was fully aware of the prophecy, which was widespread in Judaea and throughout the east, that the ruler of the world was destined to come from Judaea." (Such a prophecy is reported in almost identical terms by Tacitus [*Historiae* V, 13] and Suetonius [*Vesp.* 4].)

"The basis of such as the prophecy was undoubtedly *messianic.* Josephus, when he mentioned it in his book, added that the Zealots interpreted it as a reference to the Messiah. It was then that Josephus decided to make use of the belief by expanding the prophecy. To convince the Romans, he attributed to himself the qualities of a soothsayer. This might have greatly encouraged the Roman soldiers. It may be declared that Josephus' prophecy was uttered between Jan. 15, the date of Galba's death, and July 1, AD 69 the day in which Vespasian was

8. Josephus and Vespasian

(392) Having thus survived both a war with the Romans and with his own companions, Josephus was brought by Nicanor before Vespasian. (393) The Romans all rushed to see him, and as the mob crowded around the general there arose a hubbub of discordant cries, some exulting over his capture, some threatening, some elbowing their way to get a closer view. (394) Those further off clamored for the punishment of their enemy; but those close by remembered his exploits and were astounded at such a strange reversal of his fortunes. (395) As for the officers, the resentment they had felt before was forgotten at the sight of him. (396) Titus, in particular, was impressed by the courageous bearing of Josephus in his misfortunes and by pity for his youth. When he remembered how he had fought before and saw him now a prisoner in enemy hands [*a*], he was led to reflect on the power of fortune, the sudden tilting of the scales of war, and the absence of stability in human affairs. (397) So he led many Romans at the time to share his compassion for Josephus, and his pleading with his father was mainly responsible for sparing the prisoner's life. (398) However, Vespasian ordered him to be guarded with every precaution, since he intended to send him shortly to Nero [*a*].

9. Josephus' prediction of Vespasian's accession as emperor

(399) Hearing this, Josephus asked for a private interview with him. Vespasian ordered everyone except his son Titus and two friends to withdraw, and Josephus thus addressed him: (400) "You suppose, Vespasian, that in the person of Josephus you have taken a mere prisoner; but I come to you as messenger of a greater destiny. Had I not been sent on this errand by God, I knew the Jewish law and how it becomes a general to die. (401) Are you sending me to Nero? Why then? Will [Nero and] [*a*] those who follow him before your accession remain long on the throne? You, Vespasian, will be Caesar and emperor, you and your son here. (402) So bind me then more securely in chains and keep me for yourself; for you, Caesar, are master not only of me, but of land and sea and the whole human race. For myself, I ask to be punished by closer confinement, if I have dared to take the name of God in vain." (403) For the moment, Vespasian seemed to attach little credit to this speech, assuming it to be a trick of Josephus to save his life. (404) But gradually he became convinced, for God was already awakening in him thoughts of empire and by other portents foreshadowing the throne [*b*]. (405) Moreover, he found that Josephus had proved an accurate prophet on other occasions. For one of the friends present at the private interview remarked: "If these words are not a nonsensical invention of the prisoner to avert the storm which he had raised, I am surprised that he had not predicted the fall of Jotapata to the inhabitants and his own captivity." (406) But Josephus replied

The upper Jordan valley and river

The lower Jordan

Jerusalem pottery found in the excavations

that he had predicted to the people of Jotapata that their town would fall after forty-seven days and that he himself would be taken alive by the Romans [*c*]. (407) Vespasian privately questioned the prisoners about these statements and, when he found them true, he began to take seriously those concerning himself [*d*]. (408) While he did not release Josephus from imprisonment or chains, he presented him with clothing and other valuable gifts and continued to treat him with kindness and consideration [*d*].

E. VESPASIAN'S CONQUERING ADVANCE

Chapter IX

1. Vespasians' army in Caesarea and Scythopolis

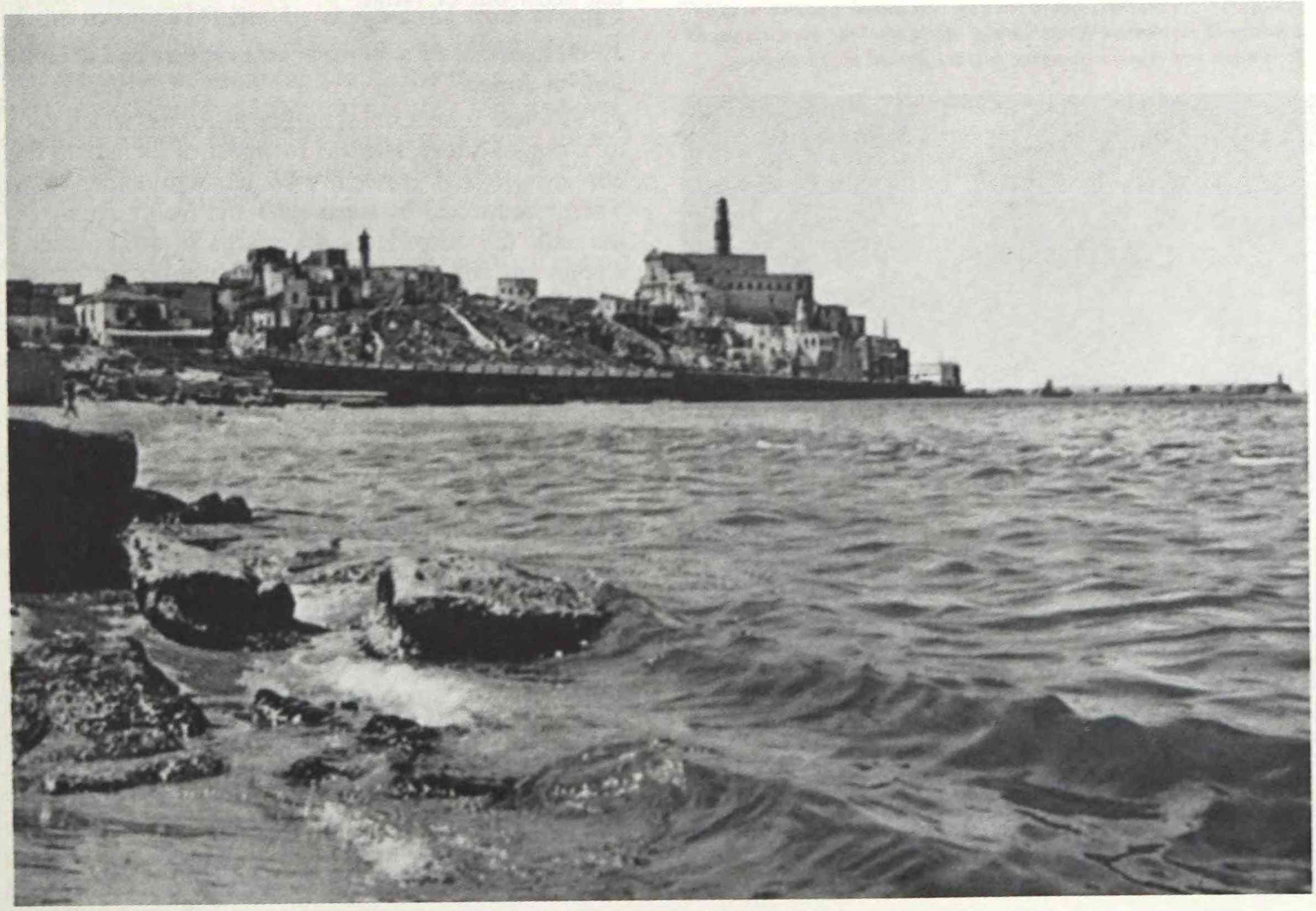
(409) On the fourth of the month of Panemus [*a*], Vespasian marched his troops to Ptolemais and from there to Caesarea-on-the-sea, one of the largest cities in Judaea, with a predominantly Greek population [*b*]. (410) The citizens received the army and the general with blessings and various congratulations, prompted partly by their feeling of good-will towards the Romans, but mostly by hatred of the vanquished. This feeling manifested itself in a loud and universal clamor

proclaimed emperor in Alexandria. It appears that the role played by Josephus is somewhat similar to that of Agrippa I at the time of Claudius' accession (*War* II, 204, 214). In both instances, the intermediary was richly rewarded by the conqueror. Vespasian undoubtedly heard of Josephus' share in the propaganda on his behalf, bearing it in mind as he awaited the coming events. While all this was taking place in Vespasian's camp, the conquering army advanced still nearer to Jerusalem. While the siege was taking place in AD 69, the proximity of the Roman army spread news in the city on events in the Roman camp. Realizing that Vespasian would become emperor, Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai (a contemporary of Josephus, and a pacifist) reasoned that since a new ruler would be confronted with weighty problems, he might be prepared to reach a peaceful solution and would bring the provincial war to a speedy conclusion. When Vespasian was proclaimed emperor at Caesarea, Josephus, who was with him, was released from his chains." (A. Schalit, *Encyclop. Judaica*, Vol. X, p. 254).

409[*a*] *Panemus* Approx. July 23, AD 67.

409[*b*] Notwithstanding the predominantly Greek population and the flight of the Jews in recent months, Caesarea had remained part of Jewish Judaea. It is described in *War* I, 408–415 and commentaries.

The promontory and bay of Joppa (modern Jaffa, a suburb of Tel-Aviv)



412[c] The fifth and tenth (cf. 65 above).
412[d] *Scythopolis* Bethshean in the Jordan Valley, 55 kms east of Caesarea (*War* II, 455, 466 ff. III, 37).
414[a] *Joppa* (cf. II, 507 f) or modern Jaffa (now part of Tel Aviv) was one of the important ancient port towns on the coast of Palestine. The Hasmonean princes conquered it from its Philistine and Phoenician inhabitants in the second century BC, and its Jewish inhabitants are known since to have excelled in the art and commerce of navigation, as witnessed by the Tomb of Jason the navigator, found in Jerusalem, and the decoration of a ship thereon. After the Romans occupied Judaea, they incorporated Jaffa into Herod's independent kingdom. In line with accepted custom in cities of mixed populations, he conferred the right of a *polis* on the city, and it became the capital of a small district. Excavations in the ancient mound of Jaffa, situated east of the very ancient port, have revealed interesting remains of habitations from the Bronze Age to Jewish, Roman, Byzantine and Arab times.
415[b] The Greek historian and geographer Strabo (first century BC) found occasion to complain of robbery committed by the Jewish people of Joppa after the Hasmonean period. Its tough inhabitants were far from prosperous at the time and they resented foreign rule; when anarchy followed the revolution and a holy war was declared against the pagans, they became pirates, attacking foreign shipping and greatly endangering navigation in the eastern Mediterranean.
420[a] *The Andromeda Rock* is still visible in the Jaffa anchorage and its name has been immortalized through an attractive legend loved by the ancient Greek navigators.
428[b] Cf. *War* II, 507 f.
437[c] *Thirty days* was a period of mourning for Moses, Aaron, or Jewish kings, while the normal period was seven days. Most consider this remark an exaggeration of the author. While this is one of the least attractive passages in all of Josephus' writings so far as conceit is concerned, the author's purpose here was also to build a dramatic contrast in view of the passage following.
437[d] Somber flute players are known since ancient times among both pagans and Jews; they are also mentioned in Matt. 9, 23.

Scythopolis remained a Roman winter resort after the wars: Its pagan population and Roman wintering soldiers flocked to the theater

for the punishment of Josephus; (411) but Vespasian by his silence quashed this demand, proceeding as it did from an ignorant crowd. (412) Two of the legions [c] he established in winter quarters at Caesarea, finding this city suitable for the purpose; the fifteenth legion he sent to Scythopolis [d] to avoid burdening Caesarea with his whole army. (413) The climate of the latter is, like Scythopolis, as mild in winter as it is suffocatingly hot in summer, being situated on the plain and on the coast.

2. The Romans' pursuit of the pirates of Joppa

(414) Meanwhile, the Jews who had been driven by sedition from their towns, and the refugees whose homes had been destroyed, joined to form a sizeable force, and proceeded to rebuild Joppa [a]—recently devastated by Cestius [a]—to serve as a base. (415) Then, as they were cut off from the country, which had been overrun by the enemy, they decided to turn to the sea [b]. (416) Accordingly, they built a large pirate fleet and made raids on shipping along the coast of Syria and Phoenicia and the route to Egypt, making navigation on those seas quite impossible. (417) When Vespasian heard about this gang, he dispatched a body of infantry and cavalry to Joppa, which entered it at night, as the town was unguarded. (418) The inhabitants were forewarned of the coming attack, but in their fright made no attempt to keep the Romans out and sought refuge in their ships, where they spent the night out of range.

3. Destruction by a storm at sea; capture and demolition of Joppa

(419) There is no natural harbor at Joppa, which ends in a rugged shore, straight for most of its length, but curving slightly crescent-wise at both ends. (420) These are formed by steep cliffs and reefs running far out into the deep. Here the marks of Andromeda's chains are still shown, proving the antiquity of this legend [a]. (421) The north wind, beating full on this shore and dashing waves high against the cliffs [b], makes the roadstead more dangerous to sailors than the watery deep. (422) Here the men of Joppa were tossing, when towards dawn they were struck by a violent gale, known to the sailors in those parts as the "Black Norther." (423) It dashed some of the ships to pieces against each other on the spot, others it drove onto the rocks. As the waves surged forward, many pushed their way out into deeper waters—so frightened were they of the rock-strewn coast, but even in the open sea the mountainous waves overwhelmed them. (424) There was no place to escape to, and no safety if they stayed where they where; the fury of the wind repelled them from the sea, that of the Romans from the town. There were agonizing shrieks as the vessels collided amid great noise as they broke up. (425) Of the men on board, some perished, engulfed in the waves, many were crushed by the wreckage, while some thought it less awful to

die by their own swords than to wait for death in the sea. (426) Most of them, however, were swept to shore by the waves and their mangled bodies hurled against the cliffs. A wide area of sea was stained with blood and the coast was covered with corpses; for the Romans, lining the beach, killed those who were cast up. (427) The number of bodies washed up came to four thousand two hundred. The Romans captured the town without opposition and razed it to the ground.

4. (428) Thus, after a short time, Joppa fell to the Romans for the second time [*b*]. (429) To prevent the pirates from again congregating there, Vespasian established a camp on the acropolis (430) and left his cavalry in it with a small body of infantry. The latter were to stay on the spot and guard the camp while the cavalry was to ravage the neighborhood and destroy the villages and small towns around Joppa. (431) In accordance with these orders, the countryside was daily devastated, pillaged, and reduced to an utter desolation.

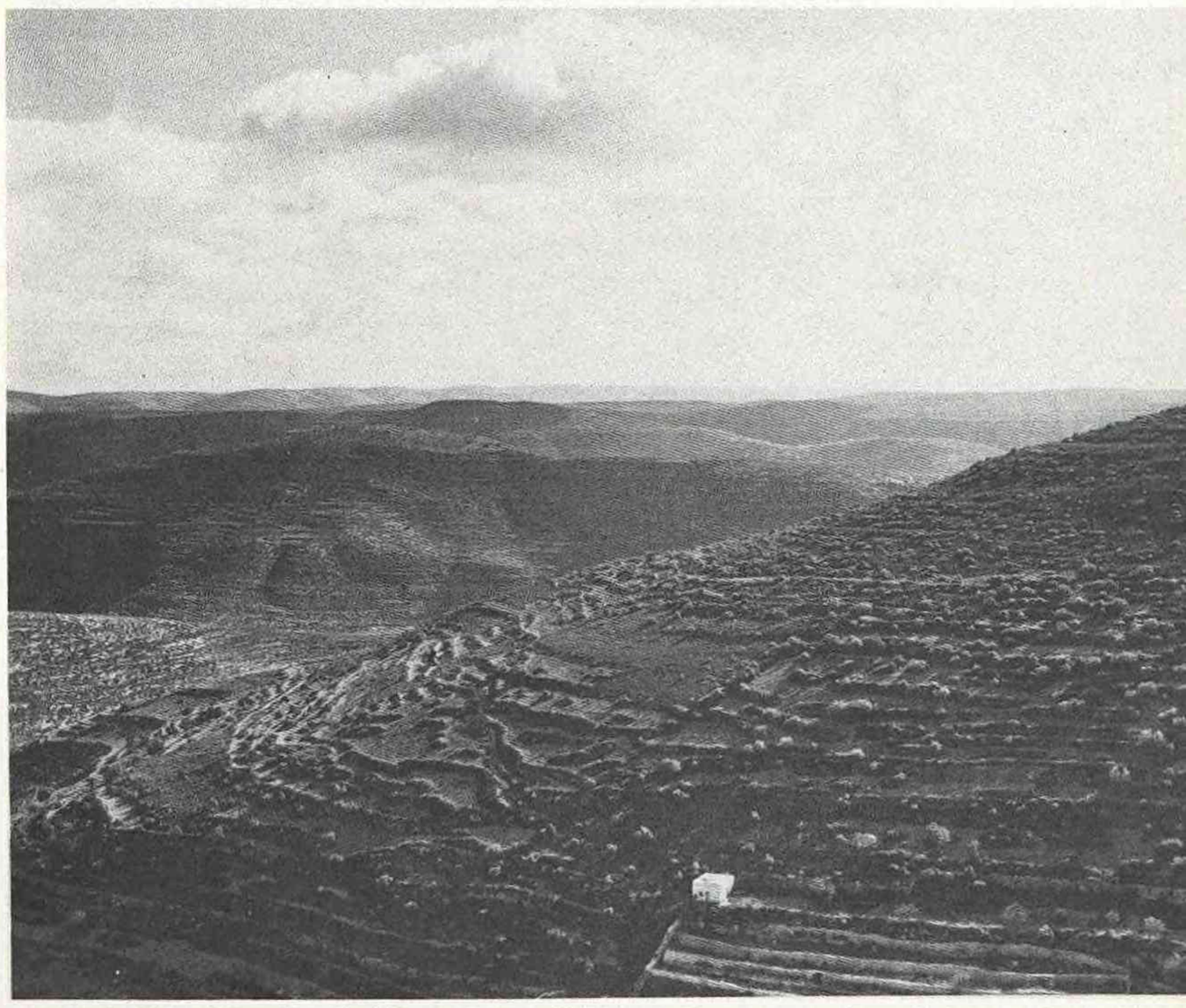
5. News of Jotapata's fall heard in Jerusalem

(432) When the news of the fate of Jotapata was received in Jerusalem, at first most refused to believe it, both because the disaster was so overwhelming and because no eyewitnesses had come to confirm the report. No one had survived to tell the tale. (433) Rumor, with its natural propensity to embroider tragic tidings, spontaneously announced the news of the fall of the town. (434) But by degrees the truth trickled through from place to place, and everyone realized that there was no room for doubt. The facts, however, were embellished by fiction; it was thus reported that Josephus himself had fallen when the city was taken. This report filled Jerusalem with extreme distress; (435) in every house and family fallen relatives were mourned, but the mourning for the commander was nationwide. (436) While some grieved for a guest-friend, others for a relative, some for a friend, others for a brother, all alike wept for Josephus. (437) Thus for thirty days [*c*] the wailing never ceased in the city, and a great many hired flute-players [*d*] to accompany their funeral dirges.

6. Josephus reviled by the people

(438) But before long the truth—what had really happened at Jotapata—came to light, and when the death of Josephus was found to be an invention, and it was learned that he was alive in Roman hands, and that he was being treated by the commanding officers with a respect no prisoner could expect, they demonstrated as much anger with him for living as they had formerly expressed sorrow when they believed him to be dead. (439) Some reviled him as a coward, others as a traitor; the city seethed with indignation and curses were heaped upon his head. The citizens were maddened by their reverses, and their disasters only added fuel to the flames. (440) A defeat, which with sensible people induces precaution and efforts to provide

Galilee in northern Judaea and the surrounding territories in AD 66–70



The terraced hills of Judaea, including Galilee, conserved the soil and its moisture, and thus supported a large rural population

against similar occurrences, only goaded them to further calamities; and the end of one misery was always the beginning of the next. (441) They were still more eager to punish the Romans in the hope that, in having their revenge on them, they would also be avenged on Josephus. (442) Such was the agitation prevailing in Jerusalem.

7. Vespasian's visit with Agrippa at Caesarea Philippi

(443) Vespasian, however, had gone to visit Agrippa's kingdom. He had been invited by the king who proposed to entertain the general and his troops [*a*] with all the wealth of his royal household, and at the same time to quell, by their aid, the disorders within his realm. Setting forth from Caesarea-on-the-sea, Vespasian marched to the other Caesarea called Caesarea Philippi [*b*]. (444) There he rested his troops for twenty days while he was being fêted himself and made offerings of thanks to God for his successes, (445) But when he was informed that Tiberias [*c*] was on the verge of rebeilion and Tarichaeae [*c*] had revolted already, both being part of Agrippa's dominion, he thought that now was the time to march against the rebels as he intended to crush the Jews everywhere, and also to repay Agrippa's hospitality by recalling these cities of his to their allegiance. (446) So he sent his son Titus to Caesarea to bring the forces still there to Scythopolis [*d*], the largest city of Decapolis in the neighborhood of Tiberias, where he himself met him. (447) Then, advancing with three legions, he encamped thirty furlongs [*e*] from Tiberias at a place well within view of the rebels, called Sennabris [*e*]. (448) Then he sent the decurion Valerianus with fifty horsemen to make proposals of peace to the townsfolk and to induce them to give pledges; for he had heard that the people in general were anxious for peace, but were overruled and being driven into war by individuals who forced them to fight. (449) Valerianus rode to Tiberias and, on approaching the wall, dismounted and made his men do the same, to allay any suspicion that they had come to skirmish. (450) But before any parley had taken place, the leading rebels sallied out against him with arms to meet him, headed by a certain Jesus, son of Shaphat [*a*], the leader of this band of brigands. (451) Valerianus thought it unsafe to join battle in defiance of his general's orders even if victory was certain and, moreover, dangerous for a handful of unprepared men to engage a large force equipped for battle. (452) He was disconcerted by the unexpected daring of the Jews, and fled on foot with five of his companions who likewise abandoned their horses. Jesus and his troops brought back these steeds in triumph to the town, as delighted as if they had captured them in battle and not by a surprise attack.

8. Surrender of Tiberias

(453) This so disturbed the elders and more respected of the citizens that they fled to the Roman camp;

443[*a*] Actually only part of the troops (cf. 446 below).

443[*b*] Cf. *War* II, 168.

445[*c*] *Tiberias* and *Tarichaeae* (Magdala) had been added to King Agrippa's kingdom early in Nero's reign, but its Jewish nationalist population refused to accept Roman guardianship and Agrippa's Roman leanings.

446[*d*] *Scythopolis*, some 32 kms south of Tiberias, on the west bank of the Jordan, was the capital of ten-city Decapolis, whose nine cities—or *poleis* with a large Hellenistic population—were situated east of the Jordan. Cf. *War* II, 458, 446 f., 480, 477.

447[*e*] 30 furlongs = 6 kms.

447[*e*] *Sennabris* (Tsinabrei) was a little town on the southwestern end of the Sea of Galilee, near Philotera (Beth Yerah) dating back to the period of the Second Temple (mentioned in the *Jerus. Talmud Megillah I; Shavuot,* IX).

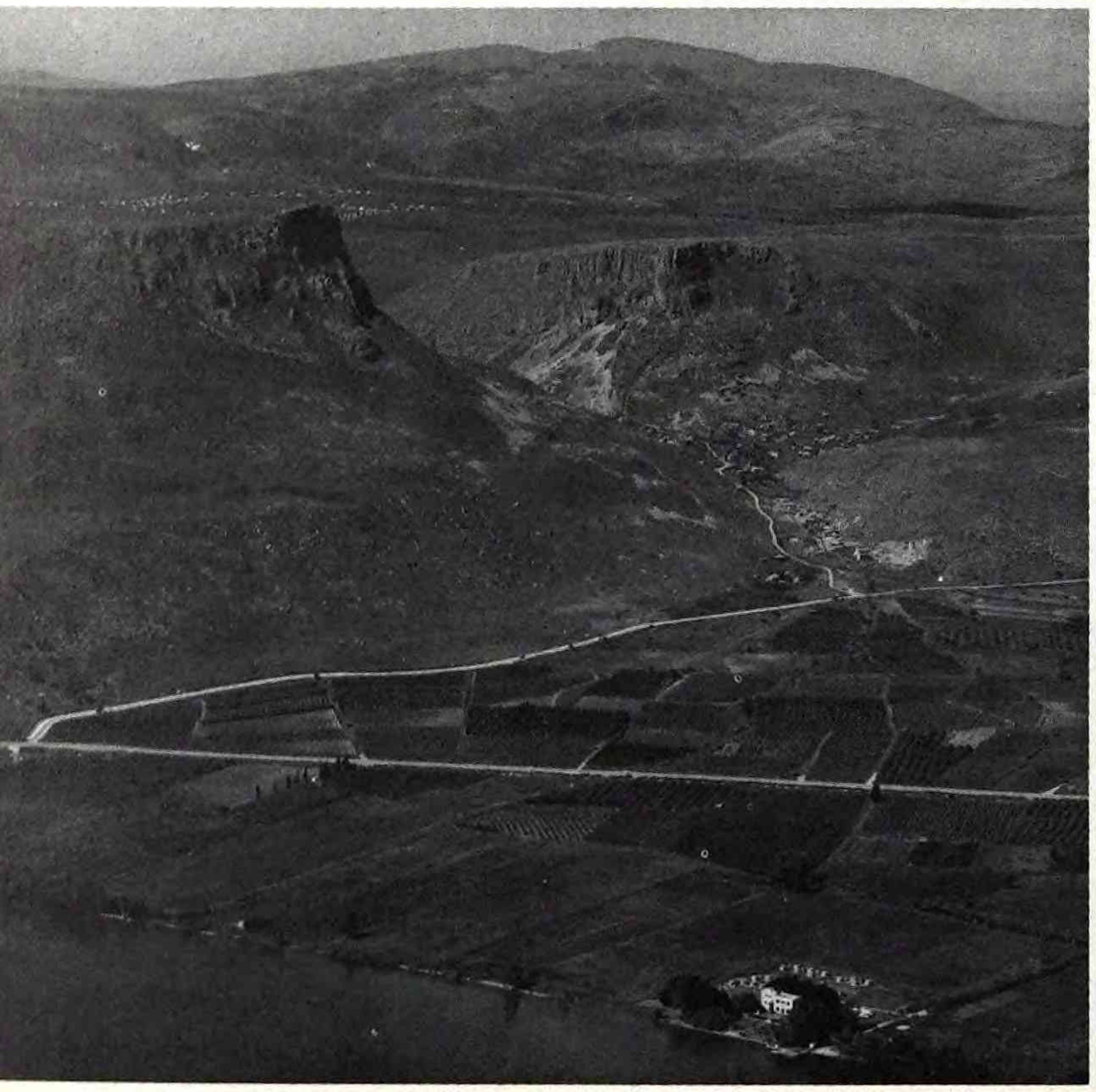
450[*a*] Joshua, son of Saphias, a chief magistrate of Tiberias, was a notable Zealot sympathizer (cf. *War* II, 599).

458[*b*] Vespasian's camp was situated at *Hammath* near the present thermal baths south of Tiberias (cf. IV, 11). A safe tactical path to Tiberias would have led along the ridge of the steep hills which practically descended to the end of the lake (see map).

462[*a*] *Tarichaeae* or Migdal-Nunia, is situated north of Tiberias on the lake shore (cf. II 634 f., III, 445–457). In the Gospels, the town is called Magdala, home of Mary Magdalene.

465[*b*] *Generosity* Nevertheless, *Life,* 156, flatly contradicts this statement, maintaining that the people of Tiberias heard that Tarichaeae had already been fortified. This may possibly refer to Josephus' reservation that he could not protect Tarichaeae's vulnerable lake shore which would have involved considerable resources he did not possess.

Aerial view of the plain of Genesareth (Kinneret) and the hills behind Tarichaeae (Migdal)



(454) and after calling the king to their aid, threw themselves at Vespasian's feet, entreating him not to disregard their appeal, or impute to the whole city the madness of a few; (455) let him spare a people who had been friendly to the Romans at all times, and punish only the authors of the revolt, under whose power they themselves had been kept thus far, longing as they were to negotiate terms. (456) The general, though angry at the whole city for the seizure of the horses, nevertheless yielded to their entreaties, because he noticed Agrippa's concern for the town. (457) The delegates thus secured submission terms on behalf of all the citizens; whereupon Jesus and his supporters considered Tiberias no longer a safe place to stay in, and fled to Tarichaeae. (458) The next day Vespasian sent forward a body of horses under Trajan to proceed to the ridge [*b*] to find out whether the whole population was peaceably disposed. (459) When he had assured himself that the people were unanimous with the petitioners, he marched his army to the city. The people opened their gates to him and met him with acclamations, hailing him as savior and benefactor. (460) As the troops were held up by the narrowness of the gates, Vespasian ordered his men to throw down part of the south wall and thus opened a wide passage for the soldiers. (461) However, in deference to the king, he ruled out pillage and violence, and for the same reason spared the walls after receiving from Agrippa a guarantee for the future loyalty of the inhabitants. He thus brought new life to a city which had suffered grievously from its internal divisions.

Chapter X

1. Vespasian's advance upon Tarichaeae, the core of revolt

(462) Then marching to a spot between Tiberias and Tarichaeae [*a*], Vespasian built his camp and fortified it with more than usual care, in anticipation of prolonged fighting. (463) For the whole body of revolutionaries was pouring into Tarichaeae, relying on the strength of the place and its proximity to the Lake of Gennesar, so-called by natives. (464) The city was situated, like Tiberias, at the foot of the hills and except on the side which was washed by the lake, it had been fortified all around by Josephus with strong walls, although less so than at Tiberias, (465) for the fortifications there had been built at the outbreak of the revolt when he had money and power in abundance, whereas Tarichaeae had only enjoyed the remnants of his generosity [*b*]. (466) The inhabitants had a sizeable fleet ready on the lake to evacuate them if they were defeated on land, and equipped for naval combat, if necessary. (467) While the Romans were entrenching their camp, Jesus and his supporters, undeterred by the strength and perfect discipline of the enemy, made a sortie, and at the first onset scattered the workmen and tore down a short length of the wall. (468) But when they saw the legionaries mustering, they withdrew quickly to their own lines before sustaining losses; the Romans pursued and drove them to their ships. (469) They put out into the lake, keeping the Romans within bowshot, then dropped anchor and, closing up their vessels side by side like an army in line of battle, they engaged in a sea-fight with their enemy on land. (470) Vespasian, however, learning that the main body of the Jews was assembled on the plain outside the town, sent his son with six hundred picked cavalry.

2. (471) Titus, finding the enemy force exceedingly strong, sent word to his father that he required reinforcements. Observing that most of the cavalry were eager to fight without waiting for the arrival of the reinforcements, while others betrayed secret consternation at the immense number of Jews, he took up a position where all could hear him and began:

Titus' address to the troops before Tarichaeae

(472) "Romans, as I begin, I want to remind you of the name of your nation, that you may realize who you are and who are the men we are going to fight. (473) No people in the world has hitherto escaped our hands. The Jews, we must admit, have so far staunchly refused to lie down under defeat. If they in their disasters stand unbowed, would it not be disagraceful for us to flag in the midst of success? (474) I am delighted to see in your faces such admirable ardor, but I fear that the enemy's advantage in numbers may have produced in some of you a secret fear. If so, let such a man ponder again who he is and against whom he is going into battle. (475) Let him bear in mind that the Jews, though extremely fearless and reckless of life, have neither discipline nor skill in war and should be called a mere rabble rather than an army. Of our own experience and discipline nothing need be said. If alone of all nations, we exercise ourselves in military training, in peacetime as well, it is for this very object that in war we may not have to compare our numbers with our opponents. (476) What should we gain by this perpetual training if we need numbers equal to those of an untrained foe before we face them? (477) Remember again that you will fight in full armor against men who have scarcely any; that you are cavalry against infantry, that you have generals and they really have none. These advantages greatly multiply your effective strength, while the enemy's disadvantages greatly detract from his superiority in numbers. (478) Wars are won not by masses of people, however skillful the soldiers, but by courage, however little their number. Small forces can be quickly deployed and brought up to each other's support, whereas unwieldy armies do themselves more injury than they receive at the hands of the enemy. (479) The Jews are led by reckless audacity and

491[*a*] Suetonius has recorded Titus' capture of Tarichaeae (*Titus*, 4) but he erred in adding Gamla to his triumphs, as it was captured by Vespasian (*War* IV, 11-53).

495[*b*] It seems strange that the author puts the sacred Jewish term "God" in the mouth of a pagan, even if the Flavii became his patrons and benefactors.

496[*c*] Titus points out that reasonable risks must govern military strategy, a principle often observed by the Jewish opponents; but it must be stated that they also took unnecessary risks out of sheer recklessness and improper military tactics (cf. *War* III, 153, 212).

497[*d*] Titus' advance through the shallow, muddy and stony waterfront—a most dangerous tactic—presumes that the author has eliminated certain other factors in this attack on Tarichaeae while praising Titus' tactics excessively. Did the Jews stop fighting from the ramparts of the shore, or from boats to which they had withdrawn?

499[*a*] Cf. 469 above.

506[*a*] This corresponds to 26 kms in length, and 7.25 in width. The real measurements today are 22 × 11.25 kms, suggesting that Josephus' estimate was incorrect. The lake covers 40,000 acres, with a main depth of 47 m. and is situated 210 ft. below the level of the Mediterranean, forming part of the geological Great Rift, which runs from the Orontes valley in Syria to Central Africa through the Jordan Valley, Dead Sea, the Araba, the Gulf of Elath (Akaba), and the Red Sea.

508[*b*] Fishing was the main means of livelihood of the inhabitants of the numerous towns and villages along the shores of the lake. Though not a large lake, it overflowed with all kinds of fresh-water fish, including some of superior quality. The people prospered greatly from this industry; the catch was large enough to provide not only fish for local consumption, but salted fish for sale abroad (cf. Tarichaeae-Migdal-Nunia, 462, 445–457). Because of this the principal city on the lake was called Tarichaeae derived from "salted") as confirmed by Strabo's *Geography*. The fishing center was later moved to Tiberias.

509[*c*] *Panion* The Jordan is actually formed by three streams, the Hasbani, Banias (Panion), and the Dan in the foothills of Mount Hermon, 76 m. above sea level, while Panion is only one of them (cf. Pan's grotto, *War* I, 404, II, 165).

511–513 [*d*] *Phiale* 120 furlongs would be equivalent to 24 kms. from Caesarea Philippi (modern Banias) in the Gaulan Heights. However, the author has overstated the distance by twice its length. Phiale or Birket Ram is situated some 13 kms east of Caesarea Philippi, near modern Mas'adeh. The bowl-shaped Birket Ram (630 × 480 m. and 6 m. deep) was formed in the crater of an extinct volcano. On the other hand, the road leading to it is on the left of the ancient road. Furthermore, the old theory of Birket-Ram's connection with the source of Pan (Banias) is incorrect.

515[*a*] *Lake Semechonitis* As the Jordan descended to the Hula swampy region (the former Lake *Semechonitis*), it divided again into several streams.

515[*b*] *The Jordan Valley* In the next ten miles before it enters the Sea of Galilee *(Genessar)* near *Julias,* it descends 280 m.

515[*c*] From the Sea of Galilee, the river winds its way southwards in a winding course 166 kms long in the ravine of the Jordan Valley, although the distance to the Dead Sea (Lake Asphaltitis) is only 104 kms long as the crow flies. The river is overgrown with thick tropical vegetation and rich in wild life, including boar and other wild animals. It was not easily passable, and it formed a geographical obstacle between territories on either side. No wonder Josephus refers to it as desolate country.

516[*a*]–518[*a*] *The fertile Genessar district* Indeed, the great abundance of water and fish, its fertile soil, and tropical climate turned the region into a real paradise, which attracted settlers as early as prehistoric times. Some of the most important towns flourished along its shores, such as Beth-Yerah, Sennabris, near the lake's outflow, Tiberias, Tarichaeae (Magdala or Migdal-Nunia) in the Roman period. The area was also very prosperous in the Hellenistic, Hasmonean, Roman and Byzantine periods. Early on, under the Hellenistic Ptolemies of Egypt, the fort of *Philoteria* was built on the site of ancient Beth-Yerah and served as the capital of a district, which developed into a large Jewish city in the later Roman period.

desperation, emotions which are bracing while things go well, but are damped by the smallest setback. We who are inspired by discipline, courage and heroism, which are at their peak under the best conditions, are also sustained by them in adversity to the end. (480) Furthermore, you will be fighting for a greater cause than the Jews; for though they face the dangers of war to preserve their liberty and country, what greater prize could you win than glory and the assurance that after having dominated the world, we do not let the Jews be regarded as rivals? (481) Nor should you forget that we do not have to fear an irretrievable disaster. Our reinforcements are numerous and at hand; but we can snatch a victory on our own and ought to anticipate the arrival of the reinforcements my father is sending us. Our triumph will be the greater if no one shares it. (482) My own feeling is that in this moment my father and I and you all are on trial: it will be seen whether he really deserves his past triumphs, whether I am worthy to be his son, and you to be my soldiers. With him victory is a habit; could I dare to return to him defeated if you abandoned me? (483) And you, surely, would be ashamed if your commander led the way to danger and you failed to follow! I shall lead the way, be sure of it, and I shall be the first to charge the enemy. (484) So don't fail me, have confidence that God is on my side and endorses my ardor; and let me assure you that in fighting here outside the wall, we shall achieve further success."

3. Defeat of the Jewish army outside the town

(485) As Titus delivered this address, a supernatural wave of enthusiasm seized the men; and when, before the battle, Trajan joined them with four hundred cavalry, they were vexed as if victory would bring them less credit because it was being shared. (486) Vespasian also sent Antonius Silo with two thousand bowmen, with orders to occupy the hill opposite the town and beat off the enemy on the walls; (487) these troops, as they were instructed to do, frustrated any attempt to bring help from the town to the Jewish army outside. Titus now led the charge, spurring his horse against the enemy and behind him, with loud shouts, the men followed, deploying their line across the plain to cover the entire length of the enemy's front, thereby materially increasing their apparent strength. (488) The Jews, though taken aback by the speed and discipline of this attack, stood up to the onslaught for a while; but pierced by the lances and overcome by the momentum of the cavalry, they fell and were trampled underfoot. (489) The plain on all sides was covered with corpses; the survivors dispersed and fled to the town, as fast as they could run. (490) Titus, hotly pursuing, cut down the stragglers in the rear, drove lanes through tight masses, rode past other groups, charged them from the front; there he dashed into groups which got in each other's way and trampled them underfoot. (491) He sought to head them all off as they retreated towards the walls and

turn them back towards the plain, until at length, by weight of numbers, they succeeded in forcing their way through and sought refuge in the town [*a*].

4. Tarichaeae captured

(492) But there a new terrible strife awaited them. The residents had not wanted to fight from the beginning because of their possessions and their city; now, after the defeat, they were still more opposed to it. (493) But the newcomers, who were very numerous, insisted all the more to hold them to it. (494) There were mutual angry recriminations, shouting and uproar as if the two parties were on the point of blows. From his position not far from the wall, Titus overheard this commotion; (495) "Now is the moment," he exclaimed; "why tarry, comrades, when God himself [*b*] delivers the Jews into our hands? Grasp your victory when you can. Do you not hear the clamor? The men who have slipped through our hands are at strife with each other! The town is ours if we make haste; but apart from haste there is need for effort and courage. Great prizes never come without risks [*c*]. (496) We must not wait for concord to be restored among the enemy; necessity will reconcile them soon enough. And we must not wait for reinforcements from our troops either; after beating such a multitude with a handful of men, let us have the further honor of capturing the city unaided."

5. (497) With these words he leapt on his horse and led his troops to the lake [*d*], rode through the waterfront [*d*] and entered the town first, followed by his men. (498) Terror-struck by his audacity, none of the defenders on the ramparts ventured to fight or offer resistance. Abandoning their posts, Jesus and his supporters fled across country, while the rest rushed down to the lake. (499) There they ran into the enemy advancing to meet them; some were killed as they boarded their boats, others as they tried to swim to those who had put out before [*a*]. (500) In the town there was a massacre, the same fate befalling the strangers who had not succeeded in escaping—and who tried to resist—and the residents who offered no resistance at all; in the hope of gaining a pardon; and in the knowledge that they had opposed the war, they refused to fight. (501) At last, Titus, after having slain the culprits, took pity on the natives of the town and stopped the massacre. (502) Those who had taken refuge on the lake, when they saw the city had fallen, sailed off and kept as far out of range of the enemy as they could.

6. Vespasian's pursuit of the fugitives on rafts

(503) Titus dispatched one of his cavalry to convey the good news of the deed to his father. (504) Vespasian was naturally delighted at his son's prowess and at the success of his enterprise, imagining that a very important portion of the war had been brought to a close. Going at once to the scene, he gave orders to encircle the town with guards to prevent any from escaping, and kill any who attempted to slip out. (505) The next day he went down to the lake and ordered rafts to be constructed for the pursuit of the fugitives. With an abundance of wood and no lack of carpenters, these were soon ready.

7. Description of the Sea of Galilee (Lake Gennesar)

(506) The Lake of Gennesar takes its name from the adjacent territory. It is forty furlongs broad and a hundred and forty long [*a*]. Despite its extent, its water is sweet to the taste and excellent to drink; (507) it is clearer than marsh water, which has thick sediment, and quite pure, and on every side it ends in pebbly or sandy beaches. When drawn, it is pleasantly temperate, more agreeable than that of river or spring water, but always cooler than the great expanse of the lake would lead one to expect. (508) It becomes cold as snow when exposed to the air—a regular practice of the local people on summer nights. The species of fish that live in the lake differ in taste and appearance from those found elsewhere [*b*]. (509) The Jordan flows right through the middle of the lake. The river has its apparent source at Panion [*c*]; actually it rises in the pool called Phiale from which it passes by an unseen subterranean channel to Panion. (510) Phiale will be found at a distance of a hundred and twenty furlongs [*d*] from Caesarea (Philippi), not very far and on the right of the road going up to Trachonitis; (511) the pool derives its name Phiale [*d*] from its circular shape; the water always remains level with its brim neither sinking nor running over. (512) For a long time it was not known that the Jordan rose there, but the fact was established by Philip, tetrarch of Trachonitis, (513) who threw chaff into the pool of Phiale and found it came to the surface at Panion, where the ancients believed that the stream had its origin [*d*]. (514) The natural beauty of Panion has been further enhanced by royal generosity as it was adorned by Agrippa at great expense. (515) After issuing from this grotto, the Jordan, whose course is now visible, intersects the marshes and lagoons of Lake Semachonitis [*a*]; then it traverses another hundred and twenty furlongs [*b*], and after passing the city of Julias [*b*], cuts across the Lake of Gennesar, from which, after meandering through much desolate country, it ends by falling into the Lake Asphaltitis. [*c*].

8. The fertile Gennesar district

(516) The plain of Gennesar, skirting the lake, which takes its name from the lake [*a*], is an area whose natural property and beauty are very remarkable. Thanks to the rich soil, there is not a plant that does not flourish there, and the cultivators in fact grow every species; (517) the air is so temperate that it suits the most diverse varieties. The walnut tree, which is the most winter-loving, grows luxuriantly beside the

519[*b*] The shores of the Sea of Galilee, from Capernaum northwards, were the scene of the early ministry of Jesus. Excavations made on many sites west of the lake, such as Beth-Yeraḥ, Hammath, Tiberias, Capernaum, Magdala, Heptapegon (or Tabgha; Heptagegon = seven springs, where Jesus fed the multitude), have revealed much evidence of the splendor and prosperity of the region.

519[*c*] *Capernaum* is an ancient township on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, also known for its fishing industry. Jesus visited its synagogue, and performed healing miracles, as related in the Gospels. Capernaum is identified with the modern Tell el Hum (Kfar Tanhum of Talmudic fame). A limited section of the historic town, which was excavated and partly reconstructed by the Franciscans, has brought to light a third century AD synagogue (on the site of the older one) and, what is of great interest, the quarter where, according to Fr. B. Bagatti, who has excavated the site, the early Jewish-Christians lived near the ancient synagogue; they erected a modest chapel over the site of the abode attributed to Peter. The site is also identified by Talmudic sources, which relate that at the beginning of the second century AD (and later) a community of Jewish-Christians existed in Capernaum; they were defined as *mīnīm*, a Talmudic term for sects holding views considered unacceptable by Pharisaic tradition. The actual identification of the site excavated within a Jewish village, as suggested by the Franciscan archaeologists, is still in doubt according to other authorities. *The springs of Capernaum,* a few in number, are situated west of the ancient town and about 1,200 m. from the Tiberias-Safad road. They are called *Tabgha,* a mispronunciation of the Greek *Heptapegon,* meaning seven springs.

520[*d*] *Coracin* = perch ("musār" to the natives).

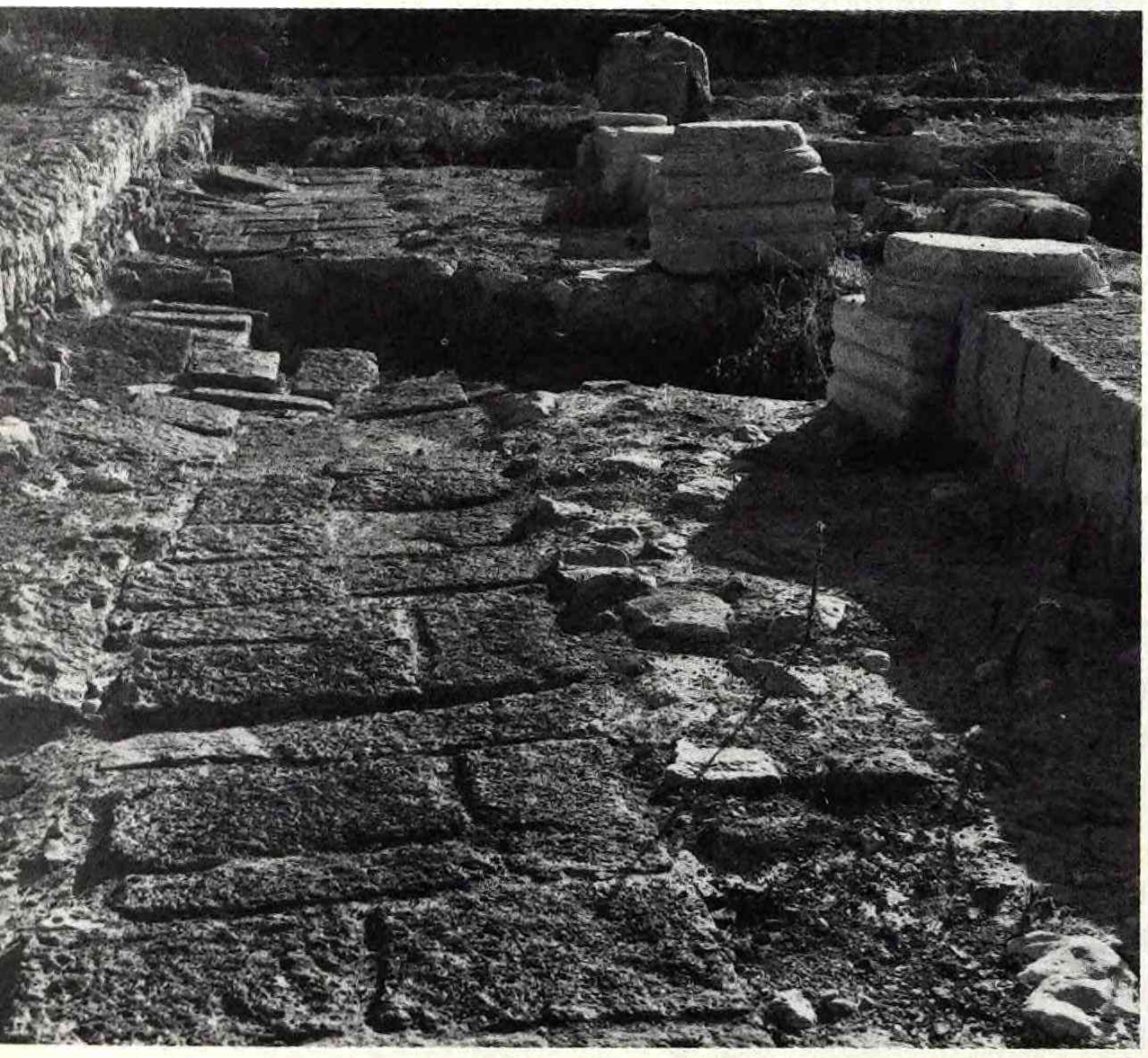
520[*e*] The Lake Mareotis near Alexandria; this ancient theory connecting Capernaum with the Nile, is incorrect.

521[*f*] 30 × 20 furlongs = 6 and 4 kms.

523[*a*] *Piracy on the Sea of Galilee?* The author's mention of light sailing ships "built for piracy" raises the question whether such ships reflected a supplementary occupation to lake transportation or fishing. Other ancient sources, however, provide no answer.

528[*b*] *"These wretches"* Josephus had old scores to settle with the Tarichaeans (*War* II, 608 ff.) and his dislike evidently colors his description of this tragedy. Strange as it may seem, we find that he often placed more blame on fighting Jews than on Romans. This, and other examples, may provide a measure of the inner struggle he endured in his attempt to portray the tragedy of his people to the Roman world. Though his actual recording of fact is not so much at fault, his interpretation of the events must be weighed in the light of his anti-war prejudice.

Paved street of Tarichaeae (Magdala)



palm tree, which thrives on heat, and side by side with the fig and olive, which require a milder air. (518) One might deem it nature's crowning ambition to force together, in a single spot, the most discordant species, and that, by a healthy rivalry, each of the seasons, as it were, wishes to claim the region [*a*] for her own. (519) For not only does the region produce the most surprisingly diverse fruits, but it maintains a continuous supply: for ten months on end it supplies those royal fruits, the grape and the fig; the rest mature on the trees all year round [*b*]. Besides being favored by its temperate climate, the region is watered by a highly fertilizing spring known locally as Capharnaum [*c*]. (520) Some have thought it an offshoot of the Nile, as it breeds a black fish very much like the *coracin* [*d*] caught in the lake near Alexandria [*e*]. (521) The length of the region measured along the shore of the lake which bears its name is thirty furlongs [*f*], the width twenty. Such is the character of this district.

9. The naval battle on the Sea of Galilee

(522) When the rafts were ready, Vespasian put on board as many troops as he thought adequate to cope with the fugitives on the lake, and launched his flottila. Thus pursued, the Jews could neither escape to land, where all were in arms against them, nor sustain a naval battle on equal terms. (523) For their skiffs were small and built for piracy [*a*], and were no match for the rafts, and the men on board each were so few that they dared not come to grips with the dense ranks of the Roman enemy. (524) However, they hovered around the rafts and sometimes even approached, pelting the Romans with stones at long range, then scraping alongside and attacking them at close quarters. (525) But in both these maneuvers they got the worst of it: their shower of stones merely rattled on the armor which protected the Romans, while they themselves were exposed to the latter's arrows; on the other hand, when they ventured to approach, they had no time to do anything before disaster overtook them and they were sent to the bottom, boats and all. (526) Some tried to break through, but the Romans could reach them with their lances, killing others by leaping upon the barks and passing their swords through their bodies; sometimes as the rafts closed in, the Jews were caught in the middle and captured along with their vessels. (527) If any of those who had been plunged into the water came to the surface, they were quickly dispatched with an arrow or a raft overtook them; if, in their extremity, they attempted to climb on board the enemy's rafts, the Romans cut off their heads or their hands. (528) So these wretches died [*b*] on every side in countless numbers and in every possible way, until the survivors were routed and driven onto the shore, their vessels surrounded by the enemy. (529) As they threw themselves on them, many were speared while still in the water; many jumped ashore, where they were killed by the Romans. One could see

Capernaum: The ancient living quarters of the first century AD at the foot of the synagogue (top). The octagonal structure (bottom) is the ancient chapel built over the house of St. Peter (third century AD)

531[*a*] *Roman view of the naval engagement* The total death toll in all the terrible wars around Tarichaeae and the Sea of Galilee—for all their horror—is not as large as in other battles, such as that of Ascalon (*War* III, 25) or the siege and fall of Jotapata. This is probably why the Romans regarded it as a great victory, and the naval engagement was commemorated in the triumphal procession in Rome by the "numerous ships" which accompanied it (*War* VII, 147); the historian Th. Reinach mentions bronze coins minted by Vespasian and his sons bearing the legend "Victoria Navalis."

the whole lake stained with blood and crammed with corpses, for not a man escaped. (530) During the days that followed a horrible stench hung over the region, and it presented an equally horrifying spectacle. The beaches were strewn with wrecks and swollen bodies, which, hot and clammy with decay, made the air so foul that the catastrophe that plunged the Jews in mourning revolted even those who had brought it about. (531) Such was the outcome of this naval engagement. The dead, including those who earlier fell in the defense of the town, numbered six thousand seven hundred [*a*].

A fisherman's boat, as portrayed in a mosaic

10. The fate of the Tarichaeae rebels

(532) After the battle Vespasian took his seat on his tribunal [*b*] at Tarichaeae; making a distinction between the residents and the newcomers who had evidently given the signal for hostilities, he put the question to his lieutenants whether the latter too should also be spared. (533) Their unanimous verdict was that liberation would be pernicious: once released, these expatriates [*c*] would not keep the peace and would, moreover, induce those who sheltered them to revolt. (534) Vespasian appreciated that they did not deserve to be spared and that they would only abuse their liberty to injure those who had set them free, but he asked himself how he could destroy them; (535) if he killed them then and there, he suspected that he would bitterly antagonize the residents, who would not put up with the massacre in their city of all those refugees who had sued for mercy; on the other hand, he could not bring himself to let them go under his pledge of safe conduct, and then attack them. (536) However, his friends prevailed by arguing that against Jews there could be no question of irreverence and that expediency must be preferred to decency when the two were not compatible [*a*]. (537) Vespasian accordingly granted these aliens an amnesty in ambiguous terms, permitting them to leave the city by only one route, which led to Tiberias [*b*]. (538) Prompt to believe what they so fervently wished, the wretches set out in confidence with their belongings, openly, on the permitted route. Meanwhile, the Romans lined the road all the way to Tiberias so that no one would deviate from it, and on their arrival shut them inside that city. (539) Vespasian followed in due course and had them herded into the stadium. He then gave orders to execute the old and useless, twelve hundred in number; (540) from the young he selected six thousand of the more robust and sent them to Nero at the Isthmus [*a*]. The rest of the multitude, numbering thirty thousand four hundred, he sold [*b*], except for those he presented to Agrippa [*b*], namely, the former subjects of his realm. (541) Vespasian permitted him to deal with them as he pleased, and the king in turn sold them [*c*]. (542) The rest of this mob consisted mostly of people from Trachonitis, Gaulanitis, Hippos, and Gadara [*d*], largely composed of rebels and fugitives whose unsavory careers in peacetime gave war its attractions. Their capture took place on the eighth of the month Gorpiaeus [*e*].

532[*b*] *Vespasian's tribunal,* a court martial.

533[*c*] *Expatriates,* stateless refugees.

536[*a*] *Vespasian ignored the legal procedures of law* He declared, after the atrocities of Tarichaeae, that one must not believe in legal formalities, or act in accordance with the legal procedures of law, as the rebels were beyond the law, and restrictions need not be considered in dealing with (against) them.

537[*b*] The road out of the city led along the valley near the shore, and not through any roundabout roads through the mountains, where the prisoners could escape.

540[*a*] *Isthmus* Nero, who had recently cut the first sod of the Corinth Canal, required thousands of men to dig up the rocks (Suetonius, *Nero,* 19).

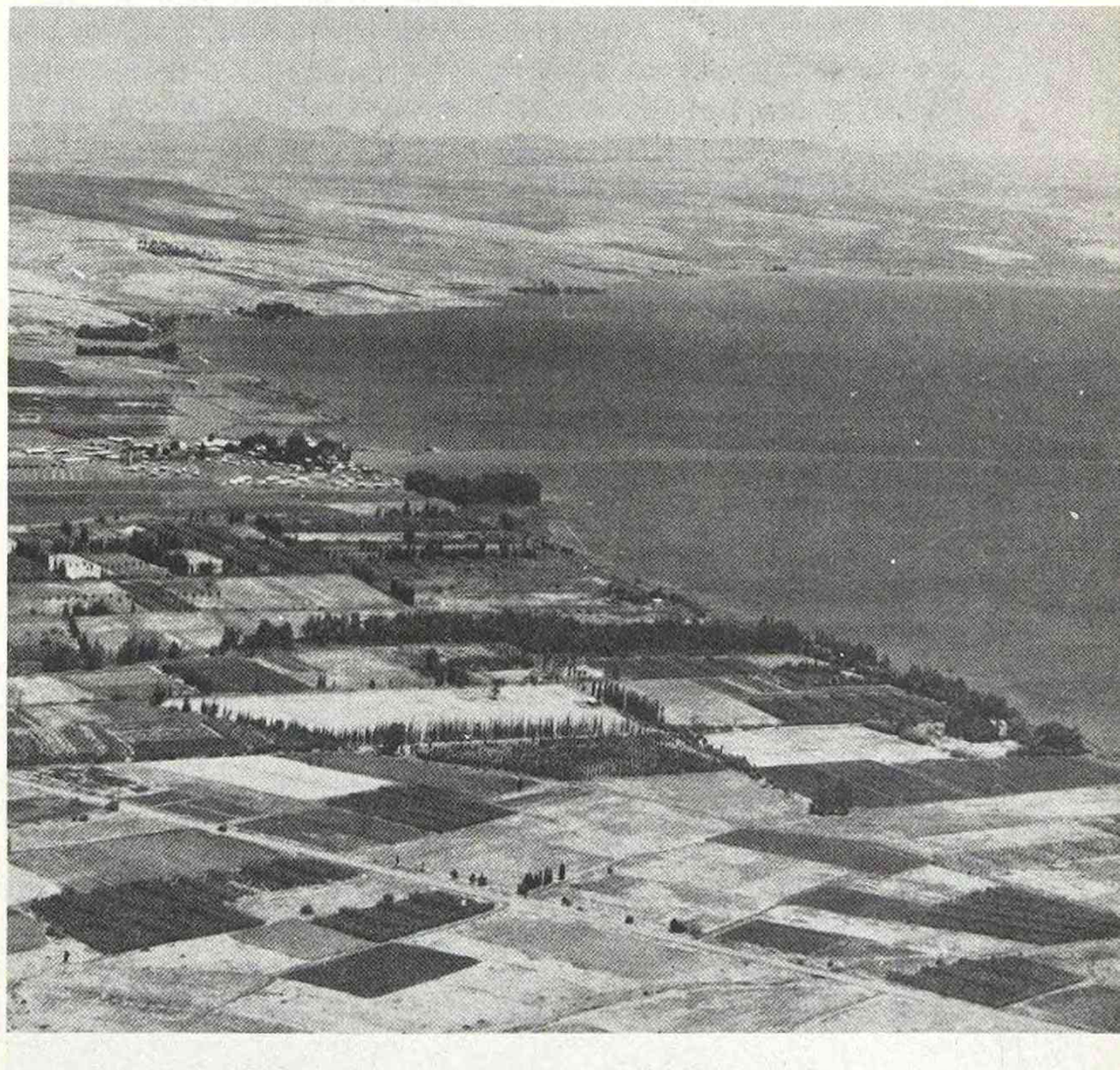
540[*b*] The term *sold* means that prisoners were auctioned off (put under the hammer) according to the laws of antiquity.

541[*c*] Vespasian's behavior towards his prisoners of war (see 536 [*a*] above) when he first promised them their lives, then subsequently treated them in a most cruel manner, is clearly a dishonor to Roman arms. Though the author, almost throughout, does not praise the Romans for such conduct, he fails to express outright indignation, first, because he feared the censors in Rome (where he wrote his works), and for the reason already explained, that the enemies he made among his own people were, in retrospect, more distasteful to him than the Romans themselves.

542[*d*] These provinces lay east of Galilee across the Jordan Valley.

542[*e*] Approx. the end of September AD 67.

The sea of Galilee



BOOK IV

1[*a*] *The Galileans* who kept the revolt alive were inhabitants of the towns which Josephus had fortified, as stated above, or whose strongholds were reinforced.

2[*b*] *Gamla* was a picturesque mountain fastness in the upper Gaulan Heights, whose ruins have recently been excavated (24[*d*] below).

2[*c*] *Sogane* and *Seleucia,* also in the northern Gaulan, east of the Sea Galilee (see map, p. 262), had formed part of King Agrippa's domain, but were nevertheless fortified by Josephus in preparation for the war with Rome (cf. II, 574; Life 187). In the end, they forsook him and made their peace with Agrippa. This town, as well as Gamla had been captured several generations before by the Hasmonean king Alexander Jannaeus, and made part of the greater Judaea.

3[*a*] *Lake Semachonitis,* later known as Lake Huleh (cf. War III, 515), was drained and cultivated in recent decades.

3[*a*] 30×60 furlongs=6 kms wide and 12 long. Since most of it is under cultivation or changed into a nature reserve, the old limits do not appear on the new maps.

3[*b*] *Daphne* is possibly Khirbet Dufna, south of the *Dan* spring, which is the source of this tributary of the River Jordan (see 3[*c*]).

3[*c*] *Little Jordan* is the river Dan, a tributary of the Jordan proper, named after the biblical city of Dan (Laish). It was the northernmost city of Israel where King Jeroboam erected an acropolis and shrine with the "Golden Calf" (I Kings 12, 29; Amos 8, 14). Another tributary east of it descends from Paneas (Caesarea Philippi) or modern Banias.

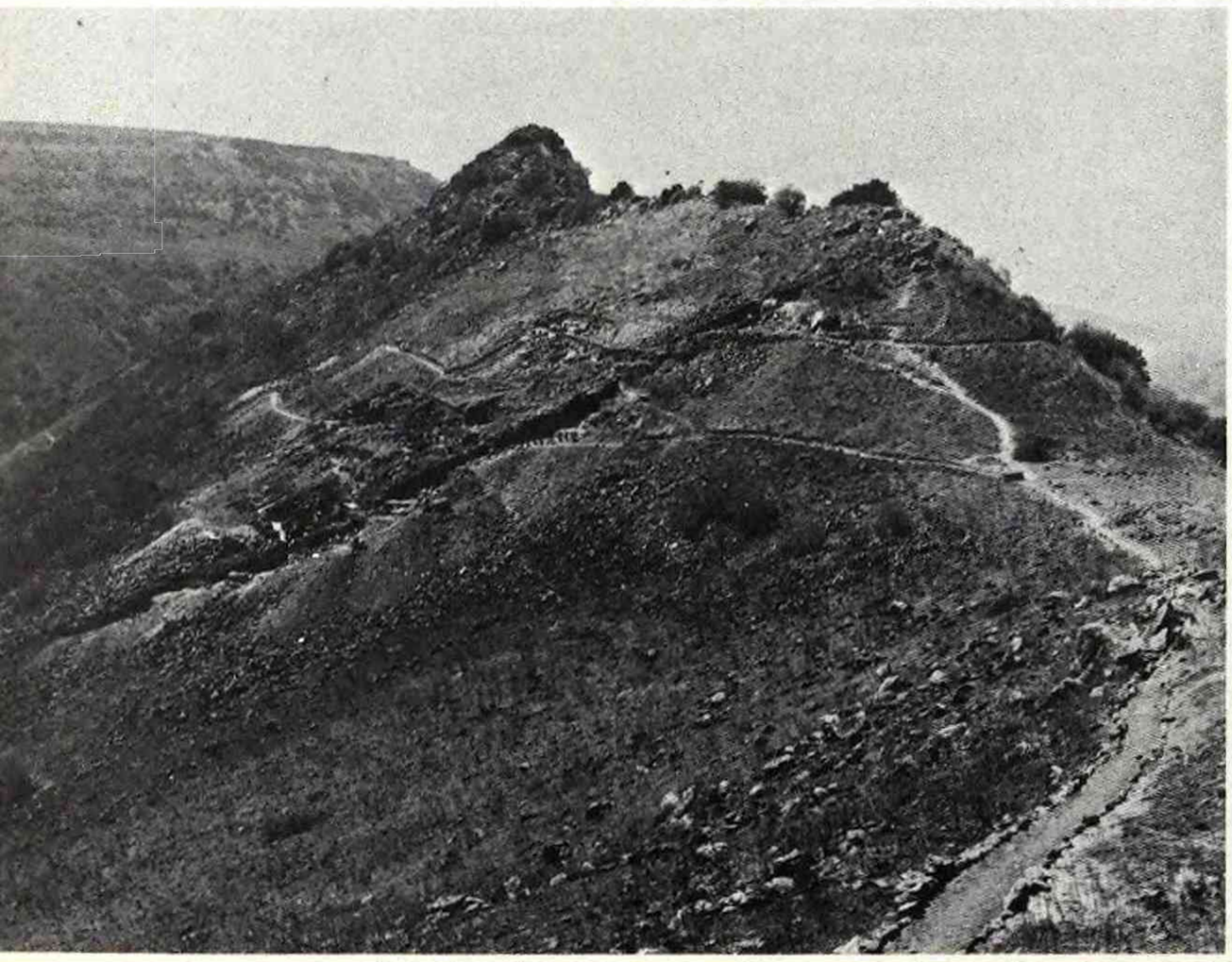
4[*d*] *Gamla's* inaccessibility was due to its precipitous height and two watered ravines between which it is perched.

5[*e*] This grammatical remark is intended to guide the Greek reader in pronouncing the name. It begins with G and it probably derives from the Hebrew *Gamal* (camel) which refers to its humplike shape.

6[*f*] *Gamla* stood on a hill that fell away sharply on both sides and in front, and was only level at the rear.

7[*g*] The unusual and almost perpendicular nature of the site is illustrated in 24[*d*] below.

Bird's-eye view of Gamla



A. THE REST OF GALILEE AND TRANSJORDAN CAPTURED

Chapter I

1. Surrender by the greater part of Galilee; some areas still in revolt

(1) The Galileans [*a*] who, after the fall of Jotapata, had remained in revolt against Rome, surrendered when Tarichaeae fell, and the Romans received the submission of all the fortresses and towns except Gischala and the forces which had seized Mount Tabor. (2) They were supported by Gamla [*b*], a city situated opposite Tarichaeae on the other side of the lake. This town was located in the territory assigned to Agrippa, like Sogane [*c*] and Seleucia [*c*]; Gamla and Sogane were both in Gaulanitis, Sogane being part of the Upper Gaulan, as it is called, and Gamla of the Lower. (3) Seleucia was near Lake Semachonitis [*a*]. This lake is thirty furlongs [*a*] wide and sixty [*a*] long, but its marshes extend as far as Daphne [*b*], a pleasant place with springs that feed the so-called "little Jordan" [*c*] under the temple of the Golden Cow [*c*], and spill it into the Jordan proper. (4) Sogane and Seleucia had been persuaded early in the revolt to submit to Agrippa; but Gamla refused to surrender, relying on its inaccessibility [*d*] even more than Jotapata had done. (5) A shaggy spur descends from a high mountain, rising midway to a hump whose downward slope from its summit—in front and behind—is of equal length; this lends it the shape of a camel, whence it derives the name; the local inhabitants pronounce the distinctive sound of the name inaccurately [*e*]. (6) The hill falls away sharply on both sides and in front in impassable ravines, but at the rear [*f*], where it hangs on to the mountain, it is rather more accessible; but here too, by digging a trench across it, the inhabitants made access very difficult. (7) The houses were built against the steep mountain flank and were astonishingly huddled together, one over the other; as a result of its steepness the town seemed to hang in the air [*f*] and looked as if it were about to topple headlong upon itself [*g*]. (8) It faced south, and its southern crest, which rose to an immense height, formed the citadel; below this an unwalled precipice fell away to the ravines. There was a spring within the walls where the town was situated.

2. (9) Nature having thus made the town almost impregnable, Josephus built a wall around it and secured it further by mines [*a*] and trenches. (10) Its occupants felt more confidence in the natural strength of its position than did those of Jotapata, though they

had fewer fighting men; they felt such confidence in their defenses that they would not admit more men. For the town was packed with refugees because its defenses were so strong that they had enabled it to hold out for seven months against the force [*b*] previously sent by Agrippa to besiege it.

3. Vespasian's siege of Gamla

(11) Vespasian broke the camp which he had set up in front of Tiberias at Ammathus [*c*] (the name could be translated as "warm baths" which are derived from a spring of warm water within the city possessing curative qualities); he then marched to Gamla. (12) As he was unable to completely invest the city, situated as it was, he posted sentries wherever this was practicable and occupied the mountain that overhung it. (13) When the legions [*d*] had, as usual, fortified their camps on these heights, Vespasian began to erect earthworks [*e*] at the tail end; those on the east of the ridge, opposite the point where the highest tower of the town stood, were raised by the fifteenth legion; the fifth legion undertook those opposite the center of town, while the tenth legion was occupied with filling up the trenches and ravines [*f*]. (14) In the course of these operations, King Agrippa approached the walls, and was endeavoring to negotiate with the defenders about surrender, when one of the slingers struck him on the right elbow with a stone. (15) He was immediately surrounded by his troops; but the Romans were all the more resolved to press the siege because of their indignation on the king's behalf, and also because of their concern for their own safety, (16) being convinced that men who could so savagely attack a fellow-countryman, who had advised them in their own interest, would shrink from no brutality in treating aliens and enemies.

4. The Romans' first disastrous assault

(17) With so many skilled hands available, the earthworks were soon completed and the engines brought into position. (18) Chares and Joseph [*a*], the most effective generals in the town, drew up their troops, though the men had lost heart at the thought that they could not withstand the siege for long, since they were short of water and other necessities. (19) However, their generals encouraged them and led them out to the ramparts, where for a time they beat back the enemies who were bringing up the engines, but when they became the targets of the catapults [*b*] and stone-throwers [*b*] they withdrew into the town. (20) The Romans then brought up the battering-rams at three points, broke through the wall and swarmed

9[*a*] Gamla, unlike Masada, was not a fortified stronghold but only a walled town with its tower. It was not provided with the means to withstand a long siege, such as the thick walls of Jerusalem, or a local garrison; its defense depended on its own people (cf. 106) and on fugitives who flocked there. The "mines" in question were apparently underground passages which provided a means of escape (cf. 79).

10[*b*] The state of affairs in Gamla in the early days of the revolt are recorded in *Life* 46 f., 179, 185 ff. Its former leader and commander was Philipos son of Yakim who owed allegiance to the pro-Roman King Agrippa II. As the fighters for freedom, headed by "Joseph, son of the midwife" moved in, they kindled the fires of rebellion and many refugees joined him, fleeing from the mixed towns populated by Syro-Hellenes, such as Susita, Caesarea-Philippi and other towns. King Agrippa's commander Acquus Modius (*Life* 114) was not only defeated at the siege of Gamla and the king wounded later (para. 14 below), but he did not regain his control over Tiberias; he managed to subdue it only after Vespasian's ultimate victories and rise to the throne (Tacitus, *Histories* II, 8).

11[*c*] *Ammathus* is the site of the warm baths of Hammath (*Antiq.* XVIII, 36). It is situated south of Tiberias and not "in front" of it. When Tiberias expanded in the following few centuries, Hammath was linked to it, as we learn from Talmudic lore.

13[*d*] Vespasian's army numbered three legions and, according to some, he was determined to cut off Gamla from distant Babylon, situated beyond the Syrian desert on the east.

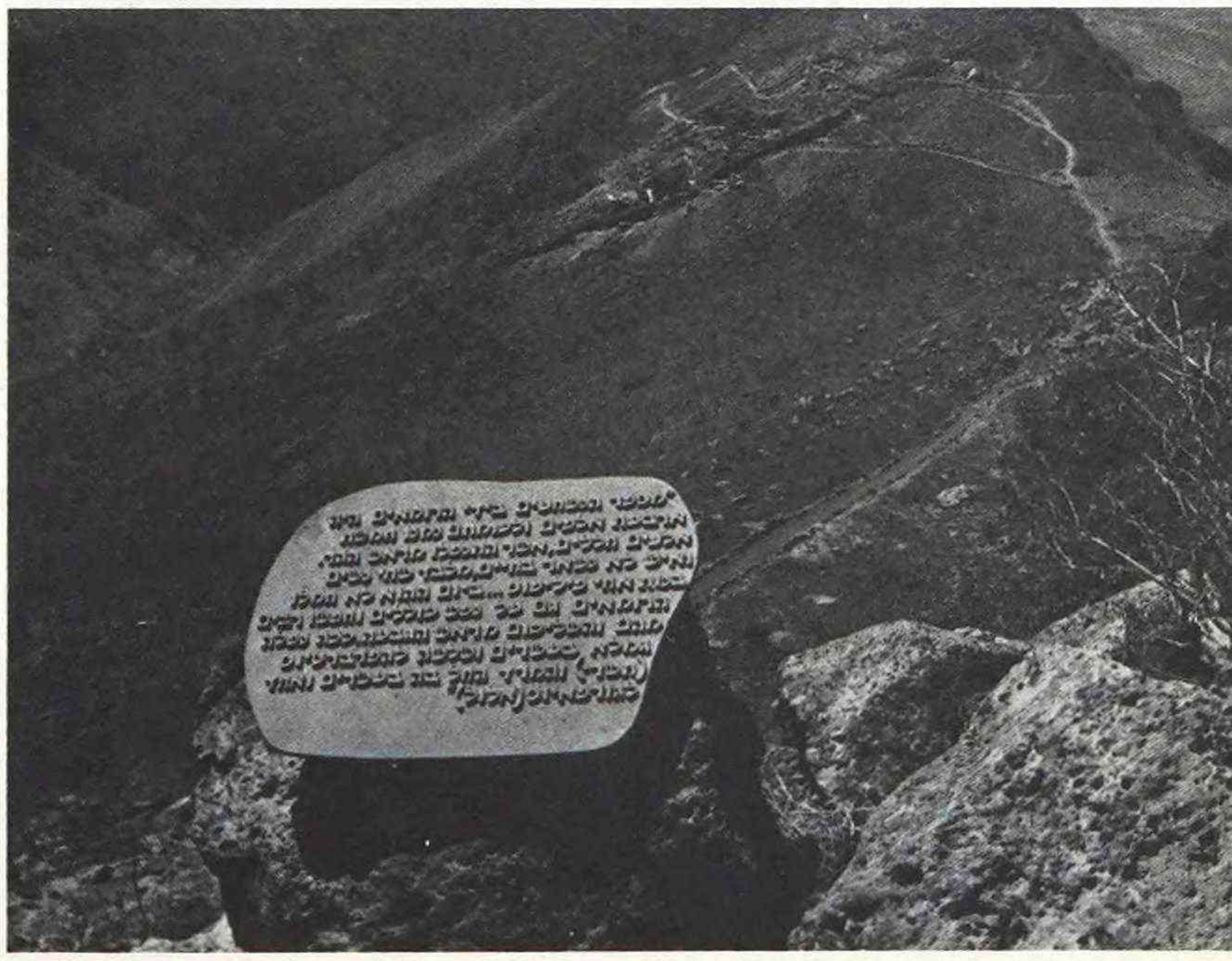
13[*e*] *Earthworks* earth, wood and stone platforms (cf. III, 162 ff.).

13[*f*] The trenches and ravines previously dug by Josephus (cf. 9).

18[*a*] *Chares* is referred to in the Mishna as Rabbi Mathia ben Haresh, a leading figure and a patriot of Gamla. *Joseph* is the one nicknamed the "midwife's son" (10 [*b*] above).

19[*b*] The *catapults or scorpiones* slung iron arrows. Stone-throwers were the *ballistae,* cf. Book III, 166 ff. and illustrations.

The remains of Gamla's structures, built of black basalt stone, recently excavated by Sh. Guttman, cling to the steep mountainside. A memorial tablet was erected there, citing Josephus' concluding sentence (IV, 8–83) and the date of its fall (Oct. 23, AD 67)



23[*c*] The roofs of their houses consisted of clay, stone rubble, and branches (in the manner of the later rural Arab houses) which could not support the heavy stampeding Romans. As the roofs caved in, the supporting wall-tops gave way as well.

24[*d*] *Archaeological finds at Gamla* The events of the siege are well depicted by Josephus, and their accuracy is borne out vividly by the striking discoveries made by Shmariah Guttman in his excavations at Gamla in 1976–1981 (and since resumed). First of all, they bear out the steplike building design of its houses erected on terraces overhanging one another and hugging the steep flanks of the mountain (as illustrated). The excavations have uncovered, above the steep and winding road of access leading into the town, many humble stone houses hugging the sloping ground, each leaning upon the next as described by Josephus. The breaches in the town-wall, caused by the Roman battering rams, are also in evidence. A tower fortress (referred to as the "citadel") was found high up, close to the ascending stepped-path in the eastern section of the town, and it was connected with a room situated west of it; an opening led to another chamber in the north which was actually situated beneath the ascending stepped-path. It appears that this house had windows which opened over the town wall. A breach was uncovered near the citadel which, in Guttman's opinion, is one of the three which were broken through by the Romans. Another breach was also uncovered not far off. Dozens of round ballista-stones, iron arrows and arrowheads were gathered (as illustrated). The Romans usually followed their ceaseless bombardment with intensive battering and a breakthrough. Many large nails were also found and are all that was left from the ladders which were thrown up by the Romans against the walls. The excavations in progress concentrated on finding evidence of the last stand, when the defenders attacked the Romans through breaches in the east. This engagement was fought in order to enable the noncombatants to escape the murderous Romans (see 62ff. below).

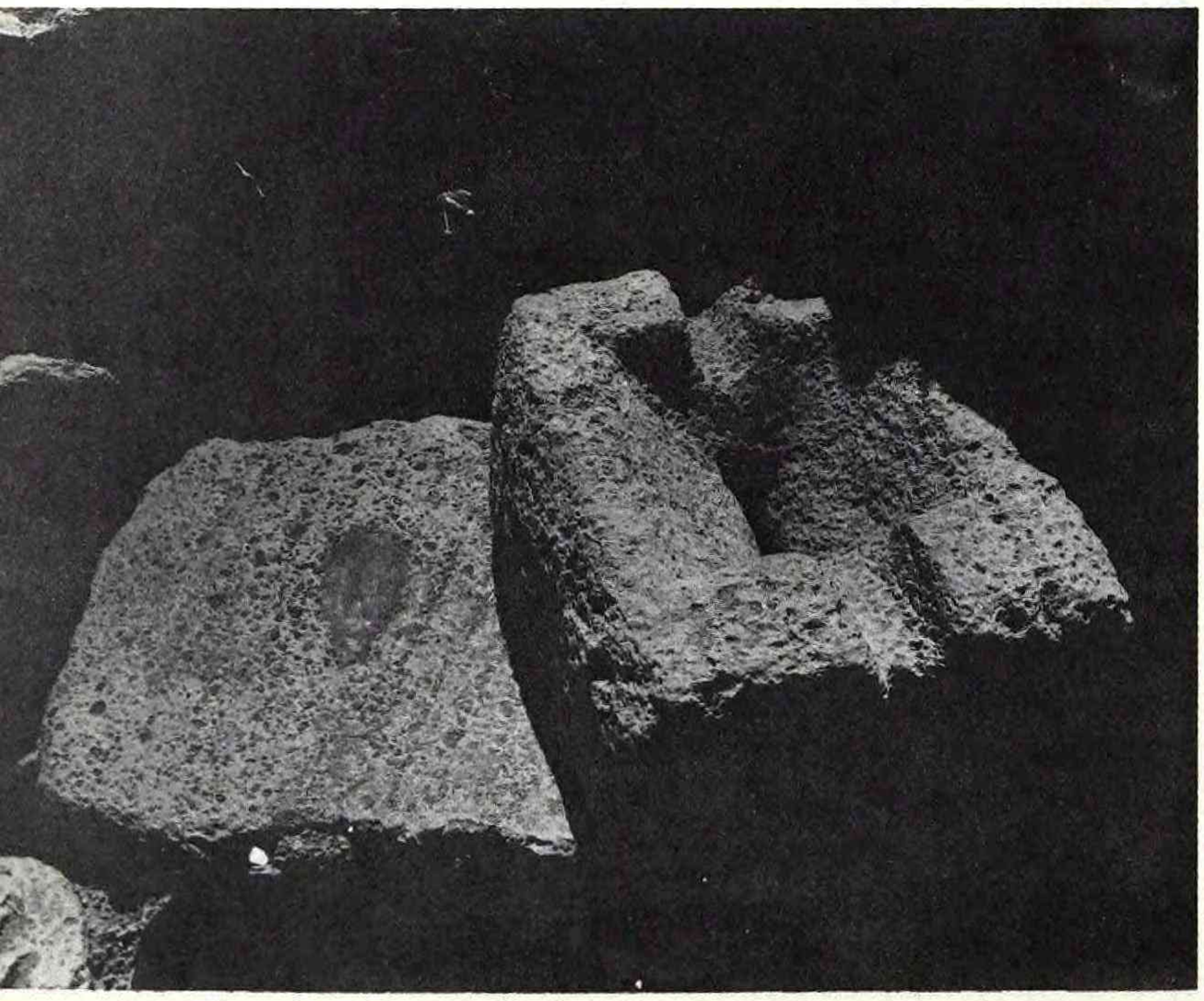
32[*a*] *Mucianus,* the legate of Syria. He was subsequently one of the most vigorous supporters of Vespasian's claims to the empire.

36[*b*] *Aebutius* has been mentioned before (*War* III, 144) at the outset of the siege of Jotapata, and in his early skirmishes with Josephus in Galilee (*Life* 115–120).

41[*c*] *Deity* A form of speech which Josephus has apparently borrowed from the works of the Greek writer Meleager, a native of Gadara (Peraea). "The deity," or Fortune, god of war, demanded blood.

45[*a*] Vespasian's admonition "protect your safety" in his invigorating speech is not convincing. One wonders how such a brilliant commander did not study the peculiar ground of Gamla, while he himself forgot to warn his army of the dangers inherent in attacking a mountain fastness, and even endangered his person when he joined in the fray.

Fragments of millstones found in one of the houses

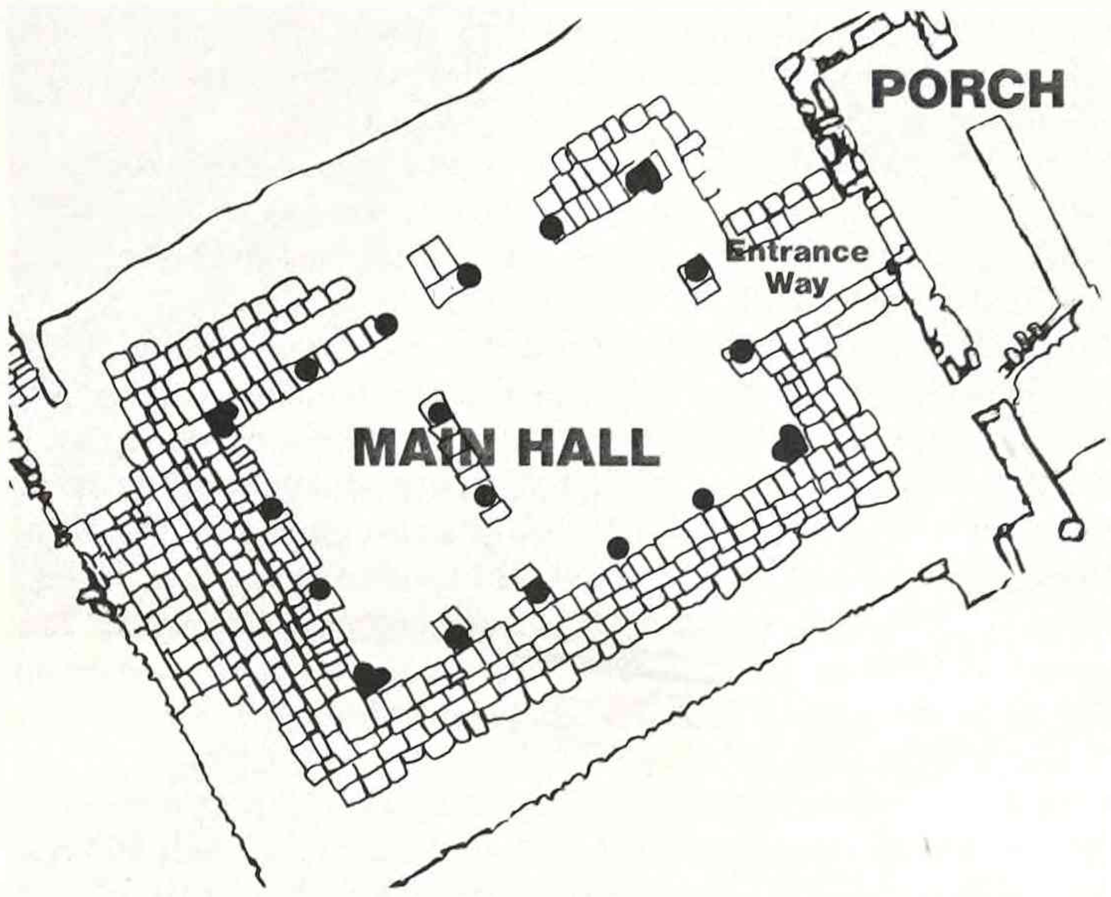


into the town through the breaches. With a great blare of trumpets, clash of arms and battle-cries, they attacked the defenders of the town. (21) At first the latter held their ground and prevented the Romans from advancing further; then they stubbornly repulsed them. (22) But under pressure of great numbers of the enemy coming from all directions, they fled to the upper parts of the town where they turned around and attacked the pursuing enemy. They pushed the Romans down the slopes and slew them as they became trapped in the narrow lanes and difficult terrain. (23) The Romans, unable either to resist the enemy above them or to force their way back through the advancing mass of their companions, took refuge on the roofs [*c*] of the enemy's houses which came close to the rising ground. (24) Under the weight of the crowds of soldiers, the houses soon collapsed. One house, as it fell, knocked down many of those underneath, and these in turn crushed those lower down [*d*]. (25) This disaster killed great numbers of the Romans; having nowhere to turn, even though they saw the houses collapsing, they continued to jump on the roofs. Many were buried under the debris. Others, while trying to escape, were caught with parts of their bodies pinned down. Still others were choked to death by the dust. (26) Seeing in this an intervention of God, the men of Gamla pressed their attack without regard to their own losses; they drove the enemy to the roofs as they stumbled in the steep alleys, and with a continuous fire from above they killed those who fell. (27) The debris supplied them with an abundance of large stones, and the dead bodies of the enemy were a source of cold steel. They wrenched the swords from the fallen men and used them to dispatch those who were not yet dead. (28) Many of the Romans flung themselves from the houses as they collapsed and met their death from their fall. (29) Even those who fled did not find it easy to escape; for they were unacquainted with their whereabouts; often they failed to recognize their friends in the dense clouds of dust and attacked each other in their utter bewilderment.

5. Vespasian in danger

(30) Some managed with difficulty to find the outlets and escaped from the town. (31) Meanwhile, Vespasian, keeping as close as he could to his battling soldiers, and aghast at the sight of the town falling in ruins about his army, had forgotten his own safety, and gradually, without noticing it, he had advanced to the highest quarters of the town, where he found himself in extreme danger with a bare handful of followers: (32) not even his son Titus was with him at this time, having just been sent off to Mucianus in Syria [*a*]. (33) Believing that flight was neither safe nor honorable, and recalling his lifetime of struggle and his reputation for courage, (34) he, like one inspired, ordered his men to link their shields to cover their bodies and armor, and without budging before

the multitude of men and missiles, he stood his ground and thus stemmed the wave of attackers that swept down from above; overawed by his superhuman bravery, the enemy slowed down their attack. (35) Relieved now of their pressure, he withdrew step by step, and did not turn his back until he was outside the walls. (36) Multitudes of Romans fell in this engagement, including the decurion Aebutius [*b*], a man who had shown the utmost gallantry and inflicted very heavy casualties on the Jews, not only in the action in which he fell, but in all previous engagements [*b*]. (37) A centurion named Gallus, cut off with only ten of his men in the fray, crept into someone's house. (38) Like his companions, he was a Syrian, and he understood when he overheard the occupants discussing at supper the citizens' plan to attack the Romans, and see to their own self-defense. In the dead of night he arose and fell upon them, slew them all, and with his men reached the Roman lines safely.



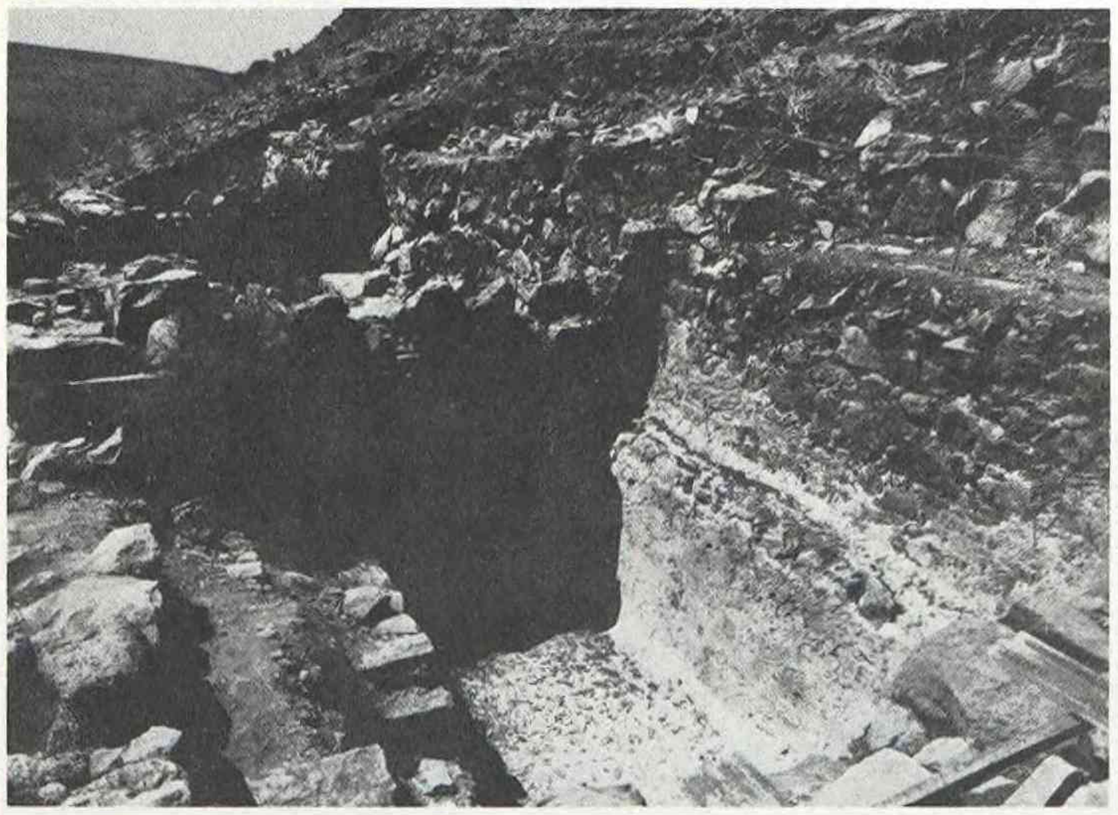
Plan of the synagogue at Gamla

6. The commander's encouragement of his troops

(39) The troops were despondent. Failure was unknown to them. They had never before met with disaster on this scale. Moreover, they burned with shame because they had left their commander to face danger alone. Vespasian therefore proceeded to console them. (40) He did not refer to himself at all to avoid the least hint of reproof. He said that they ought to face manfully misfortunes which were common to all, remembering that it is in the nature of war that victories are not won without loss of blood and fortune moves from one to another. (41) "After all," he continued, "you have killed myriads of Jews, but you have paid only a token payment to the deity [*c*]. (42) If it is vulgar to be elated at victory, it is just as cowardly to be despondent under adversity; for the transition from one to the other is rapid; and the best soldier keeps his self-control when successful, so that he may still remain cheerful when meeting with failure. (43) As for the latest events, to be sure, they did not occur because of weakness on our part or because of Jewish bravery. Their gain and our loss were both due to the difficulty of the terrain. (44) With that in mind, you might blame your own reckless impetuousness. When the enemy fled to higher ground, you should have restrained yourselves and not exposed yourselves to the danger of entrapment by pursuing them. Instead, as you were masters of the lower town, you should have enticed the fugitives gradually down to a site where you could meet on safe ground. (45) Instead, in your passion for swift victory, you neglected to protect your safety [*a*]. But recklessness in war and mad impulsiveness are foreign to us Romans, who owe all our victories to efficiency and self-discipline. That is the vice of backward peoples and the chief cause of Jewish defeats. (46) It behooves us therefore to rely only upon our own valor and to be affected by fury rather than by despondency because of this unworthy reverse. (47) But the best encourage-

Round ballista stones (piled together, bottom) were found at the site of the public building, a mute witness to the fury of the Roman assault

Remains of the mikveh *(purification font) at Gamla*



ment each of you will seek is in your own right arm; thus you will avenge the dead and punish the slayers. (48) For my part, I shall try, in this and in every engagement, to be the first to face the enemy as I lead you, and the last to retire from the field."

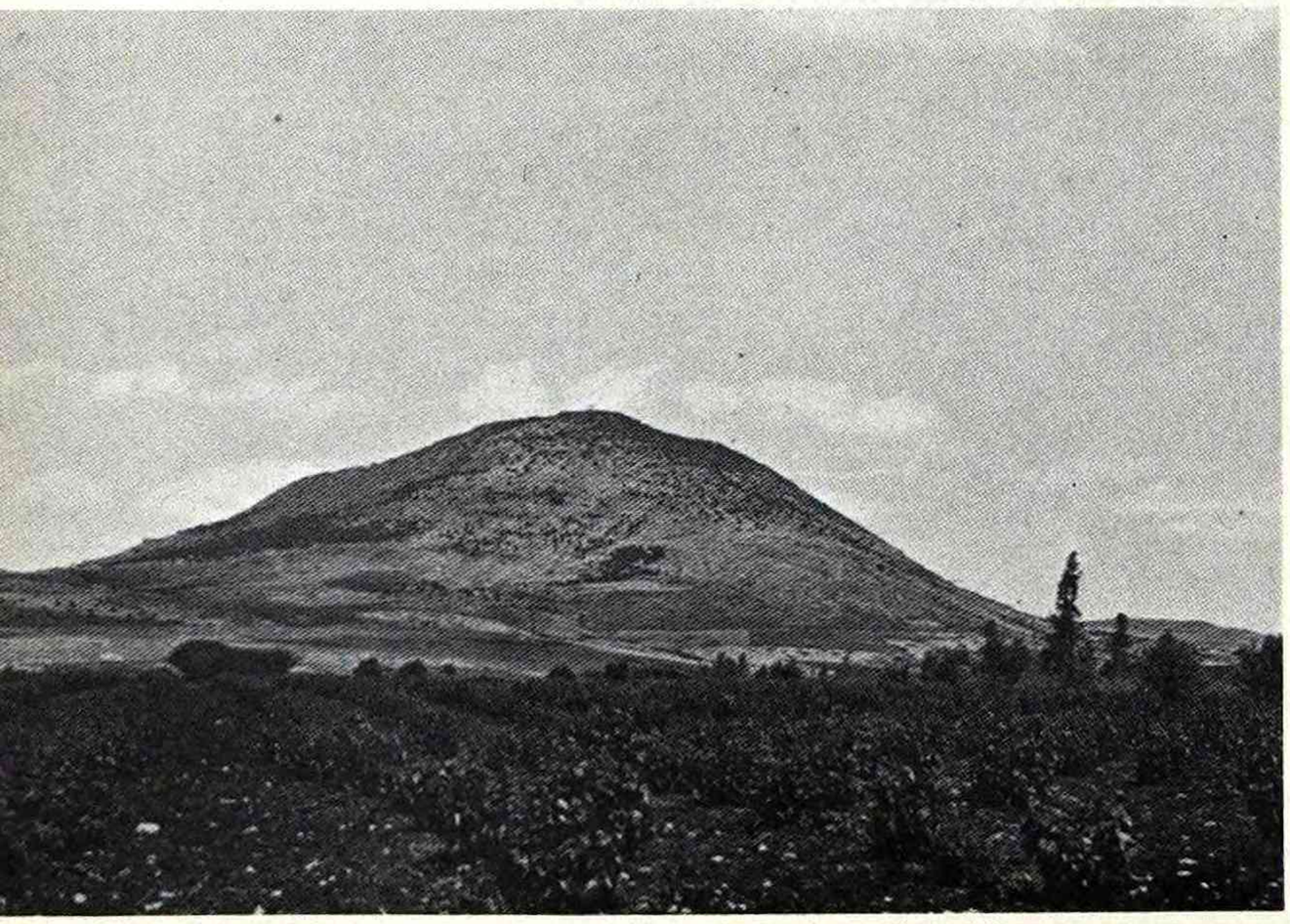
7. (49) With this speech Vespasian restored the spirits of his army. The people of Gamla, meanwhile, derived a momentary confidence from their unanticipated and striking success; (50) but later, when they considered that they had deprived themselves of all hope of coming to terms with the enemy [*b*], and realized that they could not escape—for they were already short of supplies—they became sorely crestfallen and despondent. (51) Nevertheless, they took every possible precaution to protect themselves. The bravest guarded the breaches in the wall, and the rest manned what still remained of the wall. (52) But when the Romans proceeded to strenghten their earthworks and attempted a new assault, the people began to flee from the town, running down almost impassable ravines where no sentries had been posted, or scrambling through the underground passages [*c*]. (53) Those who remained [*d*] behind for fear of being caught were starving, for every house had been ransacked for provisions to supply those capable of fighting.

8. Reduction of Mount Tabor

(54) While the people of Gamla were still holding out, despite their privations, Vespasian undertook, as a small diversion from the siege, the reduction of the occupants of Mount Tabor, which was located midway between the Great Plain and Scythopolis [*a*]. (55) The mountain rises to a height of thirty furlongs [*b*]. Its northern flank is almost inaccessible, and its summit is a plateau twenty-six furlongs [*b*] long, entirely surrounded by a wall. (56) Josephus had built this huge rampart in forty days [*c*], drawing and transporting materials from below, including water, as the inhabitants depended solely on rain. (57) On this plateau a huge crowd had gathered, and Vespasian dispatched Placidus [*d*] with 600 horsemen. (58) Finding it impracticable to ascend the mountain, Placidus made peaceful overtures to the multitude, exhorting them to grasp the opportunity to come to terms. (59) Accordingly they came down, intending to meet guile with guile; for while Placidus had lured them with honeyed words in order, as they thought, to capture them in the plain, they descended in pretended compliance, intending to attack him off his guard. (60) However, Placidus won the battle of wits; for when the Jews opened hostilities he pretended on headlong flight. Then, having drawn his pursuers far into the plain, he suddenly wheeled his cavalry about and routed them [*e*]. Huge numbers were killed; the remainder he intercepted and prevented them from reascending the mountain. (61) The fugitives gave up Mount Tabor for lost and fled to Jerusalem; the natives, their safety being guaranteed, and seeing their water-supply had

50[*b*] *Coming to terms* were instances where the Romans spared native populations while punishing only the trouble-makers.
52[*c*] See 9a above.
53[*d*] Those who remained there were not a mere handful, as may be gathered from the end of the siege, which is resumed at para. 62ff.
54[*a*] *Great Plain* The present plain of Esdraelon opening onto Scythopolis (Bethshean) in the Jordan Valley.
55[*b*] *30 furlongs*—20,000 ft. The author has exaggerated the length by a multiple of five and the height by ten. The summit of Tabor is only 1,200 ft. above ground level, and 1,920 above sea level; the plateau top is 3,000 ft. long and 1,300 at its greatest breadth. The majestic mountain has since ancient times been regarded as a stronghold and a hallowed place. Early in the Hellenistic period the Ptolemies built a royal fortress there, and it was conquered later by the Hasmonean Alexander Jannaeus. Many of the stones used in former centuries were reused by the Christians in building churches to commemorate the scene of the Transfiguration.
56[*c*] It is mentioned in a list of fortified places in *Life*, 188.
57[*d*] *Placidus*, the tribune who had fought in Galilee before Vespasian's arrival (*Life*, 213), and after the same (*ibid.*, 411, *War* III, 59, 110, etc.) and who later subdued Peraea (IV, 419 ff.).
60[*e*] Coincidentally, a similar stratagem was used long before by King Antiochus III on the eve of the rise of the Hasmoneans, when he took possession of this area, including Mt. Tabor (called Atabyrion), as related by Polybius, *Hist.* V, 9, 6–9.
62[*a*] Resuming (and partly summing up) the narrative in para 53 above.
63[*b*] Approx. November 9, AD 67.
68[*c*] Both Jewish commanders of Gamla died on the same day.
70[*a*] *Roman reverses* Titus returned from his visit to the legate Mucianus in Syria, cf. 32. Josephus does not quote figures on Roman losses, and he fails to do so in many other cases, but they must have been quite heavy. In fact, they induced Vespasian to call off most military operations in other parts of the country even before winter had set in, when he sent his legions to winter quarters (see the sequel in *War* IV, Chapter II).
76[*b*] *The miraculous storm* The author mentions another instance of a natural phenomenon which disadvantaged the Jewish fighters (the other was the mist during the fall of Jotapata, *War* III, 327). Probably he interpreted these to be divine portents of the Jewish disaster, as other such cases occur in the sequel.

Mount Tabor (IV, 54 ff.)



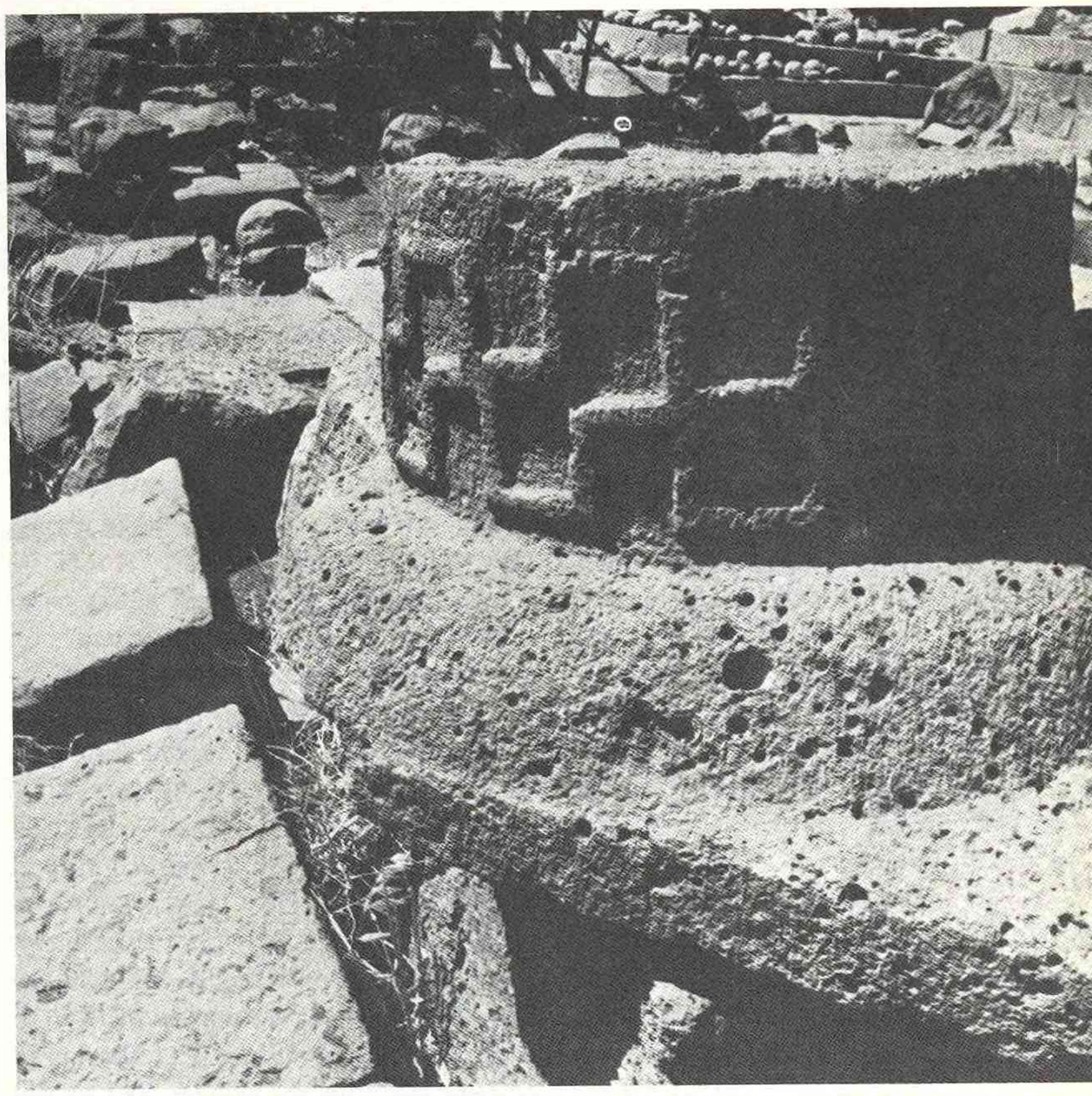
failed, surrendered the mountain and themselves to Placidus.

9. Overthrow of Gamla's tower

(62) At Gamla, while the more venturesome were slipping away unnoticed and the feebler folk were dying of hunger [*a*], (63) the combatants continued to sustain the siege until the twenty-second of the month of Hyperberetaeus [*b*], when three soldiers of the fifteenth legion, about the time of the morning watch, crept up to the base of a tower that projected opposite them and began silently to undermine it. (64) In the darkness the sentries positioned above them failed to detect them, either when they approached or after they had reached it. (65) The soldiers, working in silence, succeeded in rolling away the five principal stones. As they leapt back, the tower suddenly collapsed with a resounding crash, bringing the sentries down with it. The guards at the other posts fled in panic; (66) many who made a bold effort to break through were cut down by the Romans, among them Joseph, who was hit and killed as he tried to escape through the breach in the wall. (67) Confused by the crash, the people throughout the town rushed terror-stricken in all directions, believing that the entire Roman army had burst into the town. (68) At this juncture Chares, who was confined to bed and in the hands of physicians, expired, his death due to terror as much as to illness [*c*]. (69) The Romans, however, remembering their earlier defeats, deferred their entry until the twenty-third of the month.

10. Titus' capture of the town

(70) On that day Titus, who had now returned [*a*], furious at the reverse which the Romans had sustained in his absence, chose two hundred cavalrymen and some infantry and noiselessly entered the town. (71) When sentries discovered his arrival, they swiftly rushed to arms, shouting. News of the Roman entry spread swiftly to the center of the town; some snatched their children and, dragging their wives after them, ran with their wailing and weeping families up to the citadel; those who went to meet Titus fell incessantly; (72) while those who were prevented from escaping to the heights fell helplessly into the hands of the Roman sentries. On all sides the never ending moans of the dying were heard, and the whole town was deluged with the blood that poured down the slopes. (73) To deal with those who had retired to the citadel, Vespasian now brought up his entire force. (74) The summit, rocky and inaccessible, rising to an immense height, and surrounded by precipices, overlooked everywhere the yawning depths below. (75) There the Jews inflicted heavy casualties on the advancing enemy, rolling rocks down upon them and hurling missiles of all kinds, while they themselves remained almost out of reach on their lofty perch. (76) However, to seal their ruin, they were struck full in the face by a miraculous storm [*b*] which blew the Roman



Capital of a column with a swastikalike ornament

Detail of the synagogue and public building's main hall at Gamla with interior benches and its collapsed ruins

79[*c*] *The ravine;* see para 9 above.
83[*d*] The siege which began on October 12 ended on November 10, namely during a month.
84[*a*] *Gischala* (in Hebrew Gush-Halav, El-Jish in Arabic) a small fortified town in Upper Galilee 5 miles north of Safed; first mentioned in *Mishna Arach.* 9, 6 as the *Haqra* (the equivalent of the Greek Akra, the fortified citadel of Jerusalem; cf. *War* I, 39, 50) and listed as one of the "walled cities dating back to the days of Joshua's conquest." John had fortified it at his own expense as instructed by Josephus during his military career (*Antiq.* II, 575). Surveys carried out in the early part of the present century uncovered the remains of a synagogue dating to the 2nd–3rd centuries AD. The Maronite church, standing at the highest part of the hill, was built over the remains of one of these. The other synagogue (146 × 50 ft.) is beautifully situated near the village spring, overlooking green valleys, and built of large, carefully dressed stones. Its inner colonnade on three sides, resting on column drums, and a basement, still remain in position, and its main entrance, decorated with familiar architectural motifs, faces Jerusalem. Stone benches to seat the congregation line the long walls. The lintel of the main entrance—with an eagle depicted between the wreaths—was found in the debris. A Jewish community continued living there until the 13th century AD.
85[*b*] *Power* John (Yohanan) of Gischala, whom the author was ready to accuse of every infamy, is qualified here in a manner parallel to that mentioned in our note to *War* II, 585 ff. *The farmers' resistance movement* which is pointed out at this juncture cannot be treated casually. Though Josephus attributed its existence to the presence of revolutionary "brigands," as he calls them, he relates on a previous occasion (*War* II, 587) that during the early stages of the war, John, with his following of refugees from the border town of Tyre and adjacent villages, had set out to raid their gentile neighbors. This seems to represent the natural sequel of the age-old feud between Jewish and gentile farmers over the possession of farmland. This situation had originated in the previous century, and was headed by Judas, son of Hezekiah who attacked Sepphoris (*War* II, 56; *Antiq.* XVII, 271), the same Galilean Judas of Gamla who headed the revolutionary *Sicarii* movement (*War* II, 117–118). A Jerusalem Talmud source (*Berachot* 80, 22) informs us that *Menachem,* another leader of the resistance movement, who was murdered after the initial victory over the Romans in Jerusalem in AD 66, was a descendant of Judas.
87[*a*] The tenth legion, which had played a secondary role in the siege of Gamla, was sent to winter quarters in Scythopolis (Bethshean) to be ready to besiege Gischala. Meanwhile, Titus was sent ahead, possibly in an attempt to capture it by assault.

The site of Gush-halav, now the home of the Arab villagers of Jish (Gush)

arrows against them but checked and turned aside their own. (77) So violent was the blast that they could neither stand on the edge of the precipices, where they had no proper foothold, nor see the approaching enemy. (78) The Romans mounted the crest, quickly rounded them up and cut them down. Some offered resistance, others held out their hands in surrender. But the attackers' anger was aroused against them all when they remembered those of their own men who had perished in the first assault. (79) Despairing of their lives and hemmed in on every side, the multitudes plunged headlong with their wives and children into the artificial ravine [*c*] that had been excavated [*c*] to a vast depth well below the citadel. (80) And indeed the fury of the Romans seemed milder than the desperate self-immolation of the vanquished; four thousand were slain by the former, while those who plunged in suicidal despair over the cliffs exceeded five thousand. (81) No one escaped save two women, nieces on the maternal side, of Philip, son of Jacimus, a man of note who had commanded King Agrippa's army. They escaped death because they had concealed themselves at the time of the capture of the town. (82) Thus they eluded the fury of the Romans who did not even spare infants in arms, but time after time snatched up many of them and slung them from the citadel. (83) Thus Gamla fell on the twenty-third of the month Hyperberetaeus [*d*] after a revolt which had begun on the twenty-fourth of Gorpiaeus [*d*].

Chapter II

1. Preparing for the attack on Gischala

(84) Only Gischala [*a*], a little town in Galilee, was left unconquered. Its inhabitants were eager for peace, being mainly agricultural laborers whose only concern was the prospect of good crops. But a gang of brigands had infiltrated into their midst and some of the members of the community had been infected by their intransigence (85). These were incited and organized for revolt by John, son of Levi, a charlatan of a very wily character, full of ambitions and capable of making them succeed. Everyone knew that he was bent on war in order to attain supreme power [*b*]. (86) All the malcontents in Gischala had ranged themselves under his leadership, and it was under their influence that the population, who would otherwise probably have sent envoys offering to surrender, were now awaiting the Roman onset in an attitude of defiance. (87) To crush this opposition, Vespasian dispatched Titus with a thousand cavalrymen, while he sent the tenth legion to Scythopolis [*a*]. (88) He himself returned to Caesarea with the other two legions, to rest them after their incessant toil, and in the belief that good living in the cities would invigorate their bodies and ready them for the coming struggles. (89) For he foresaw that no light task awaited him under the walls of Jerusalem, which was not only the

royal city [*b*] and capital of the entire nation, but the focus to which all fugitives from the war had streamed. (90) The strength of its defences, both natural and artificial, caused him no small anxiety, and he assumed that the daring spirits of its defenders would, even without walls, be hard to subdue. (91) Accordingly, he trained his soldiers like athletes before a contest.

2. Urging the people to surrender

(92) When Titus rode to Gischala, he saw it would be easy to take the town by assault. But he knew that if it was stormed there whould be a wholesale massacre of the population by the soldiers, and he was already satiated with slaughter. He pitied the masses [*c*] which would be slain without distinction, together with the guilty; he therefore preferred to persuade the town to capitulate. (93) The ramparts were crowded with men, mostly members of the corrupt gang, so he asked them what gave them such assurance that, when every other city had fallen, they alone stood out against the Roman arms. (94) They had seen much stronger towns than their own overthrown by a single assault, while they saw that all those who had trusted the pledges proffered by Romans hands, which he now extended without a thought of avenging their obstinacy, enjoyed their own possessions in safety. (95) To desire liberty was natural enough, but there was no justification to persist when no other possibility remained. (96) If they refused to accept his humane proposals and pledges of good faith [*a*], they would experience the remorselessness of his arms, and learn too soon that their walls were a mere toy for the Roman engines—those walls that gave them such confidence that they were the only Galileans to show themselves truculent prisoners.

3. Titus beguiled by John of Gischala

(97) Not one of the townsfolk had an opportunity to reply to these overtures, as they were prevented from climbing on the wall; the brigands had already occupied it all, and the gates were manned by sentries who saw to it that no one slipped out to negotiate or to admit any of the cavalry into the town. (98) But John replied that for his part he agreed to the proposals and would persuade or compel obstinate dissidents. (99) However, in deference to Jewish Law, Titus (he said) must allow them that day, the seventh, on which it was an offense either to take up arms or to negotiate for peace. (100) Even the Romans must be aware that the seventh day brought them rest from all labor; if they were compelled to break that law, the man who compelled them would be as guilty as themselves. The delay would cause Titus no harm; (101) for what plot could be attempted in a single night except flight, and that he could guard against if he camped around the town? (102) It would mean a great deal to them not to infringe any ancestral customs; and it would befit one who graciously granted an unanticipated peace to

89[*b*] The *royal city* — the creation of Herod, is an adjective befitting the well-planned national capital, as described by the author in *War* V, 136–183.

92[*c*] Josephus places emphasis—as he does also on later occasions—on Titus' innate "philanthropy" because he customarily showed compassion before resorting to ruthlessness against his enemies. Roman historians (Suetonius, *Titus,* I) dubbed him *Deliciae generis humani,* "the darling of all mankind," unlike the Jews who cursed him.

96[*a*] *Roman "good faith"* In Jewish experience, this was often a fiction, yet the author goes blithely on with his narrative, without further comment.

Titus (Vatican Museum)

104[*b*] *Act of God* John's flight may not have been so cowardly, but Josephus, in the acid tones he reserved for his enemies, characterizes it as some sort of divine contribution to the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of its own enemies, to wit, John.

104[*c*]–105[*c*] *Cydasa* (Hebrew Kadesh), one of the northernmost towns of Upper Galilee, situated northwest of Lake Huleh (Semachonitis), was part of the ancient kingdom of Israel; but in the Second Temple period, it was populated mainly by gentiles. It is called Kedasa in *War* II, 459, always at war with the Galileans, whence the interracial attacks and counterattacks during the onset of the war with Rome, following the massacre of the Jews of Caesarea in 66.

107[*a*] 20 furlongs, or a little over 3.3 kms.

109[*b*] The struggle to keep ahead in mass flight, through mountainous country, by a horde of refugees trying to escape detection and certain death.

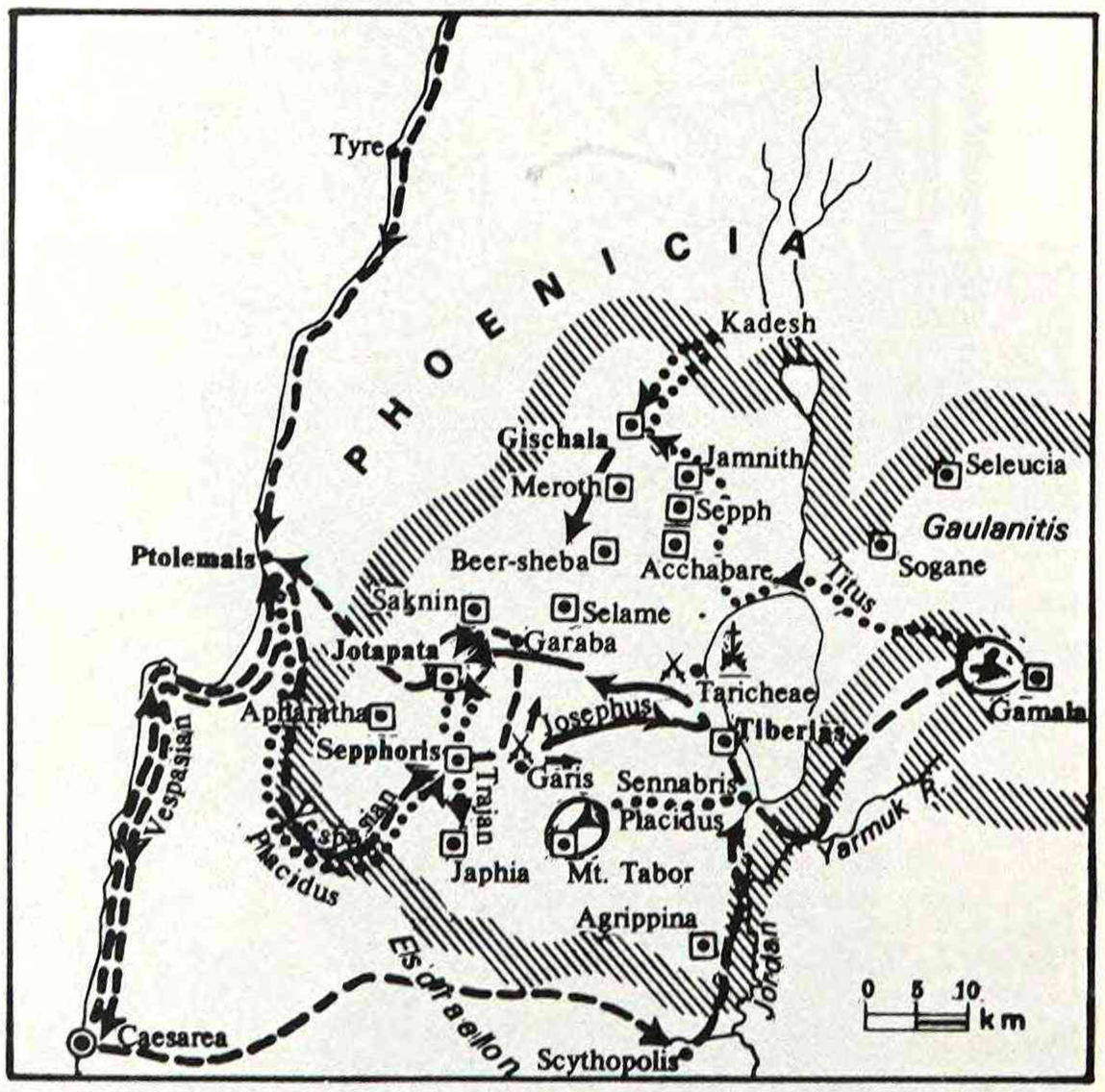
120[*c*] The capitulation of Gischala marked the end of the war in Galilee.

121[*a*] John's enthusiastic reception marks a decisive turning point in the course of the war with Rome, and reflects the first stages of the extended party strife which boded evil for the future. While its successive phases are recorded minutely by Josephus, his interpretation is hostile. Nevertheless, modern historians can adduce from his record the actual forces at play and their impact on events.

123[*b*] *Defense of the metropolis* Josephus does not spare sarcasm in quoting John's statements, while the latter, in turn, rationalizes the reasons for his flight from Gischala—namely, his fervent desire to devote his life and enthusiasm, and that of his Zealot followers, to pursuing the war in the capital. This ragged army was not satisfied with the way the war had been waged thus far and opposed its conservative leadership.

124[*c*] *Flight* The author sarcastically quotes John when he spoke of his strategic "withdrawal" from Gischala, and seems to hint that he borrowed this term from a vocabulary of defeated commanders.

Vespasian's campaign in Galilee



respect the laws of those whose lives he spared. (103) With such plans John beguiled Titus. He was, of course, less anxious about the observance of the seventh day than for his own safety; and, fearing that he would be caught when the town fell, he pinned his hopes of life on flight under cover of darkness. (104) But clearly it was by the act of God, [*b*] who was preserving John to bring destruction on Jerusalem, that Titus not only accepted this pretext for delay, but even pitched his camp further from the town, at Cydasa [*c*]. (105) This is a strong inland village of the Tyrians, who were always engaged in war with the Galileans [*c*]. Its large population and the strength of its defenses enabled it to maintain the struggle against the nation.

4. John's flight to Jerusalem

(106) At nightfall, John, seeing no Roman guards around the town, took his chance and, taking with him not only his armed followers but also a large number of non-combatants with their families, fled to Jerusalem. (107) For the first twenty furlongs [*a*] he managed to drag along a mob of women and children, though he was oppressed by fear of captivity and death. But as he passed on further, the women and children dropped behind. The lamentations of those thus abandoned were agonizing! (108) For, the farther each found himself removed from his kith and kin, the nearer he imagined himself to the enemy. Believing that their captors were hard on their heels, they became panic-stricken and turned at every sound made by their comrades in flight, as if their pursuers were upon them! (109) Many lost their way, and even on the highway many were crushed in the struggle to stay ahead [*b*]. (110) Pitiable indeed was the fate of the women and children: some even ventured to call out the names of their husbands or kinsfolk shrieking and imploring to wait for them. (111) But John's commands were obeyed: "Save yourselves," he shouted, "and flee for the place where you can avenge those left behind, if they fall into Roman hands...." So this crowd of fugitives pressed on, each man moving forward as fast as his strength allowed.

5. Titus' occupation of Gischala; Galilee subdued

(112) Early the next day, Titus advanced to the wall to conclude the treaty. (113) Coming forward with their families, the people opened the gates to him and hailed him as a benefactor who had liberated their town from oppression. (114) They told him of John's flight and begged him to spare them and to come into the town and punish the remaining rebels. (115) Titus, deciding that the people's request must take second place, at once dispatched a squadron of cavalry in pursuit of John. But they failed to overtake him, and he made good his escape to Jerusalem. But of those who had set out with him, some six thousand were killed and nearly three thousand women and children were rounded up and brought back. (116) Titus was vexed

at his failure to inflict instant punishment on John for his trickery, but he felt compensated by the host of prisoners and the numerous dead. (117) He entered the town amid general acclaim and ordered his men to tear down a short section of the wall as a sign of capture. He made use of threats rather than punishment to subdue the disturbers of the city's peace. (118) For many would denounce the innocent from personal animosity or private enmity if he tried to pick out those who deserved punishment; he therefore thought it better to leave the guilty in suspense and fear than to destroy any innocent persons with them; (119) for the guilty man would perhaps change his ways through fear of punishment and appreciate the pardon he had received for past offenses, whereas there could be no redress for those needlessly put to death. (120) However, he made the town safe with a garrison, calculated to check the rebels and to give confidence to the peaceably inclined citizens on his departure. And so the whole of Galilee was subdued [*c*], after providing the Romans with abundant strenuous training in preparation for the impending Jerusalem campaign.

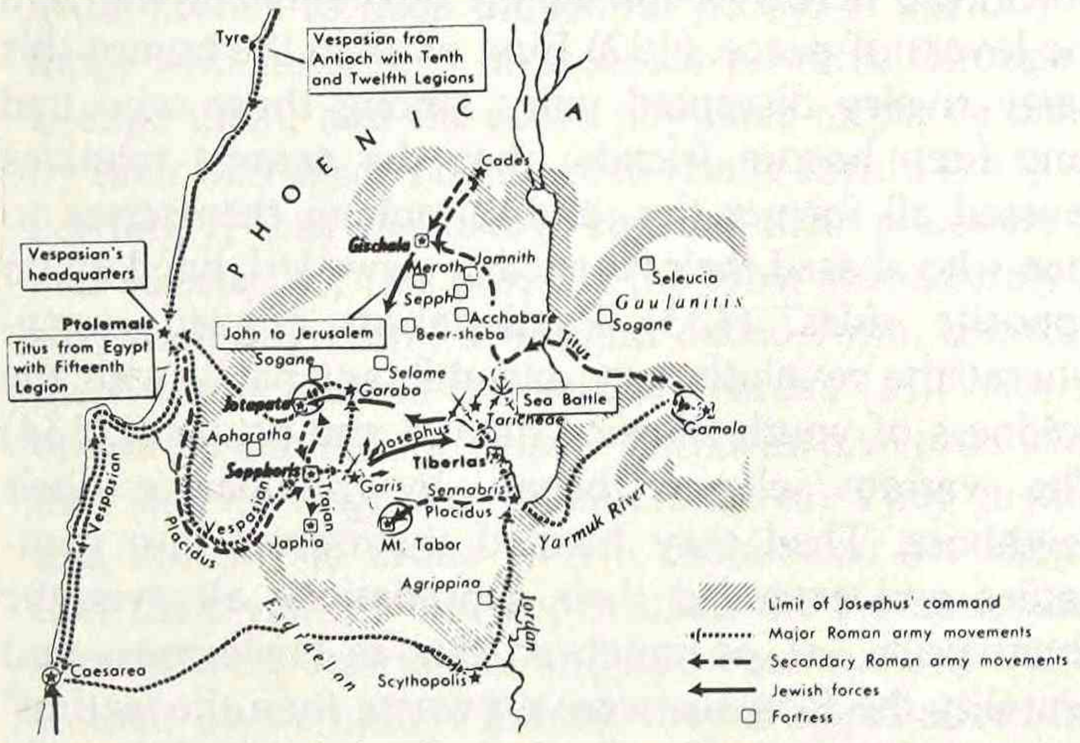
B. DEVELOPMENTS IN JERUSALEM

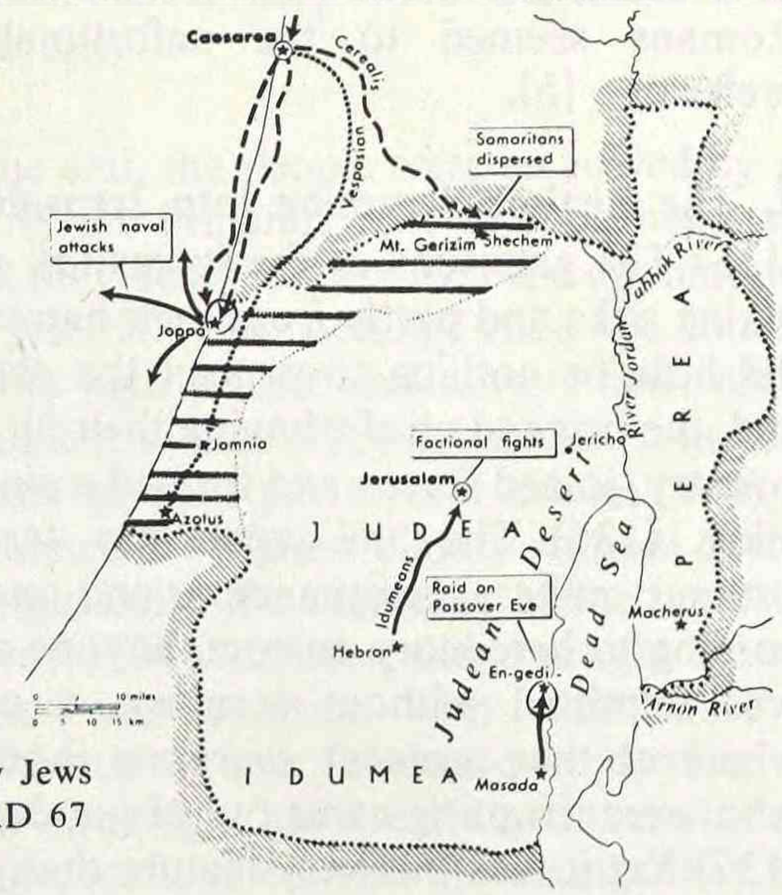
Chapter III

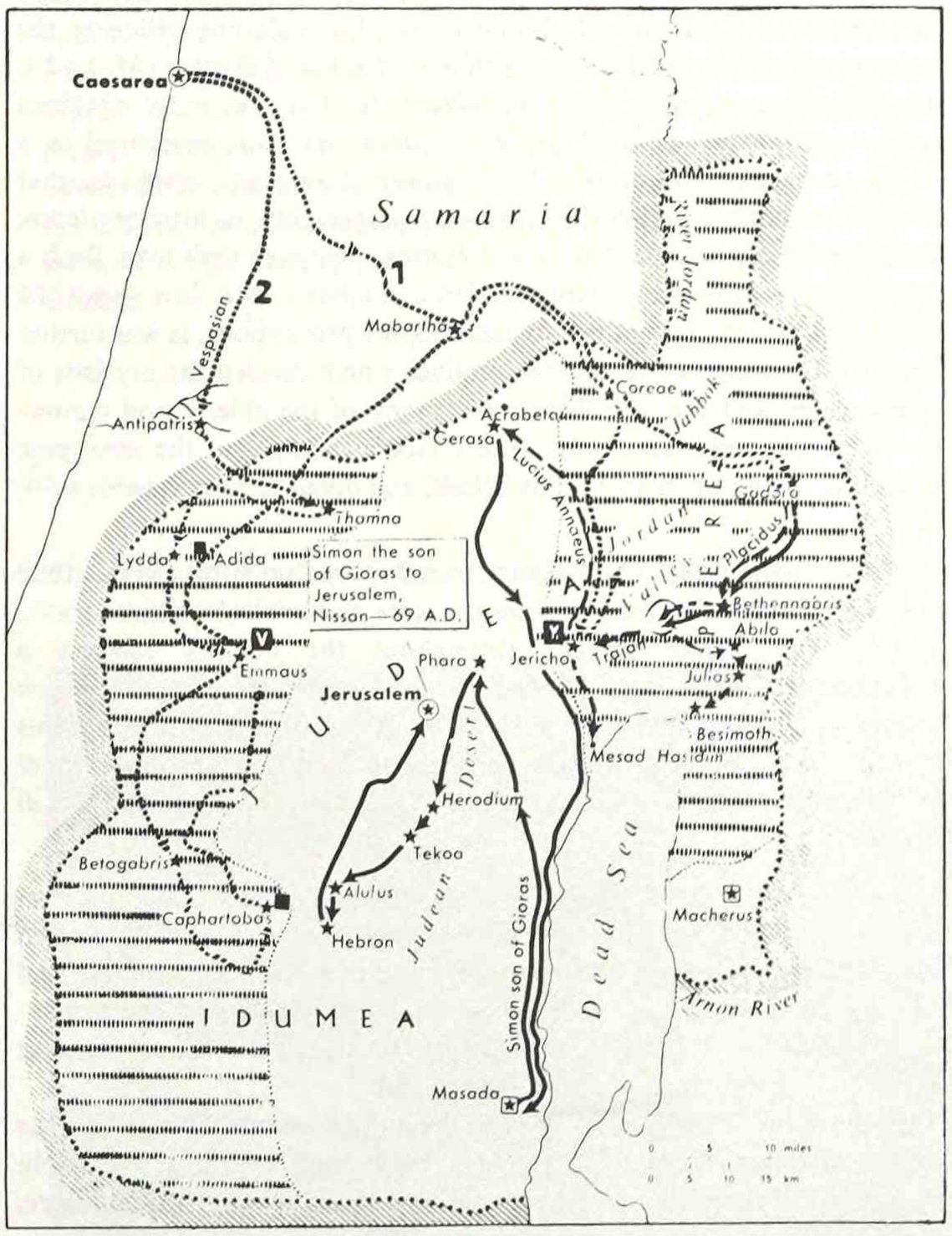
1. Reception of John of Gischala in Jerusalem

(121) On John's arrival at the capital, the whole population turned out and great crowds gathered around each of the fugitives, eagerly asking for news of events outside [*a*]. (122) Still panting and breathless from their recent stress, the fugitives nevertheless swaggered in their sorry plight, declaring that they had not fled from the Romans, but had come to fight them on safe ground. (123) "It would have been senseless and futile," they said, "to risk our lives recklessly for Gischala and such defenseless little towns, when we ought to save our arms and energies for the united defense of the metropolis" [*b*]. (124) Then they mentioned in passing the fall of Gischala and alluded to their "retreat," as they euphemistically called it, though their withdrawal was generally seen to have been a flight [*c*]. (125) When, however, the fate of the prisoners became known, the population

The campaign in Galilee (left) and in Judaea (below and right)







was seized with utter dismay as the saw in it an unmistakable omen of their own impending capture. (126) But John himself, quite unconcerned for those he had left behind, went around to the various groups, instigating them to war by the hopes he raised, reporting the Romans to be weak, exaggerating Jewish strength, and ridiculing the ignorance of the inexperienced. (127) Not even if they grew wings could the Romans ever scale the walls of Jerusalem, after being so severely mauled in their attacks on Galilean villages and wearing out their engines against their walls [*d*].

2. Sedition and party strife throughout the land

(128) With these harangues [*a*] most of the youth were drawn into his net and incited to war; but of the sober, older men there was hardly one who did not foresee what was coming and mourned for the city as if it had already perished. (129) The citizens [*b*] were in a state of confusion, but the country population [*c*] had been torn by dissension even before sedition had reared its head in Jerusalem. (130) For when Titus [*d*] had left Gischala for Caesarea, Vespasian [*d*] had proceeded from Caesarea to Jamnia and Azotus, and reduced and garrisoned these towns, returning with a large mass of prisoners who had surrendered on terms. (131) Every town was seething with turmoil [*e*] and civil war, and the moment they had a respite from the Romans they turned against each other. Contention raged fiercely between the advocates of war and the lovers of peace. (132) First of all in the homes this party rivalry disrupted unity among those who had long been bosom friends; then the nearest relatives severed all former ties, and, attaching themselves to men who shared their respective views [*f*], lined up on opposite sides. (133) Factionalism reigned everywhere; the revolutionary and militant party with the boldness of youth silenced the old and prudent. (134) The various cliques began by plundering their neighbors. Then they banded themselves into companies and extended their depredations all over the countryside [*a*], so much so that in lawlessness and brutality the Romans were no worse than the victims' own countrymen. In fact, to be captured by the Romans seemed to the unfortunate victims far preferable [*b*].

3. The Zealots' irruption into Jerusalem

(135) The garrisons of the towns [*c*], partly to avoid taking risks and partly from their hatred of the people, did little or nothing to protect the distressed. In the end, the brigand chiefs, having their fill of pillaging the country, joined forces and formed a single pack of villainy. (136) They all crept into Jerusalem—a city without military commanders, and one to which, according to hereditary custom, anyone of Jewish blood was admitted without scrutiny; a city, moreover, where at that moment everyone thought that those who were irrupting came out of goodwill as allies [*d*]. (137) Yet it was this very feature that, apart from the

127[*d*] *Their walls* This is one of the key chapters of the whole work, as evidenced by the drastic developments which follow. Josephus speaks in derisive terms of John's self-assurance and his blind confidence in the inviolability of Jerusalem, totally disregarding, in his hatred of the Zealots, any valid merits of their movement. As stated, Josephus' actual record as an annalist of the war does not lack credibility, but his bias is evident, so the record can now be viewed by modern historians through other perspectives.

128[*a*] *Harangues* The gist—and impact—of John's harangue was that he and his followers had abandoned Galilee in order to rush to the defense of Jerusalem. They were fired by the old prophetic belief, shared by many, of God's redemption and the dream of the end of days (cf. notes 131[*e*] below) when Rome would cease to exist and the kingdom of God prevail throughout.

129[*b*]–129[*c*] Josephus qualifies this statement in 131 ff. Hence para. 130[*d*], describing Titus' moves, comes rather awkwardly, breaking the logical sequence between para. 129 and 131 ff.

130[*d*] This intercalated paragraph reports Vespasian's next move in capturing Yabneh and Ashdod, assuring unimpeded progress along the Palestinian coast. The author does not report the Jewish resistance.

131[*e*]–132[*f*] *The nature of the revolutionary movement* General dissension, as described by Josephus, had split the nation into two camps, but he does not try to fathom the causes while he held fast to his pacifist views and was imbued by his priestly background and innate conservatism. While he had described the Essene movement with much understanding (*War* II, 120–161), his mind was closed to the meaning of the prevailing powerful messianic movement. What were, then, the views which he opposed with such vehemence? We have already pointed out the historic and ideological background of the revolutionary movement and its presumed origins. It is not surprising that, to the first century AD Palestinian establishment, the word "Galilean" ceased merely to refer to a particular geographical area, and took on the dark political connotation of its association with Judas the Galilean, the first Zealot leader. Even the Mishna's mention of the "Galilean heretic" refers to an extreme nationalist who reproached the Pharisees for including officially the name of the emperor in the dating of a Jewish bill of divorce (*M. Yad* 4, 8). But what is even more significant is that the early Galilean revolutionary movement of the first century BC was conceived in a politico-religious spirit marked for its powerful messianic emphasis; that the first proponent, Judah the Galilean, and, possibly, its historic victim, Jesus the Galilean, and others who followed, paid with their lives. Such a revolutionary movement, with messianic emphasis, had now swept the whole country and had grown to catastrophic proportions. It was further inflamed by social and economic motives which divided the myriads of dispossessed and the rich. Moreover, many of the elderly and conservative people were not ready to test God's mercy and the messianic gospel by taking up arms on His behalf, and opted for a peaceable solution.

134[*a*] *Countryside* The revolutionaries spared no efforts in this total war with Rome; the wealthier people were the natural victims.

134[*b*] The Zealot attacks throughout the country suggest a breakdown of the country's administration under the temporary new government which had been established in Jerusalem in the previous year on the eve of the great war. This may account also for the surrender of Yabneh and Ashdod (Jamania and Azotus) to the Romans (130[*d*] above).

135[*c*] *The garrisons* referred to were apparently the Roman forces in the coastal cities, Samaria, and the adjacent territories which had been stationed in the wake of previous recent punitive Roman campaigns and had signed peace treaties with the local citizenry. They avoided becoming embroiled in the Jewish strife, either out of self-defense, or because they found no reason to put a stop to it.

136[*d*] *Allies or brigands?* Though the author brands these "allies" as bands of brigands, many may have been Jewish groups irresistibly drawn to the Holy City, the inviolable fortress protected by God where, so they believed, they would fight out their last war and, with God's help, insure final victory and the beginning of redemption.

139[*a*] *Eminent citizens. The Zealots seize the reigns of government* The gathering in Jerusalem of large bands of Zealots from every part of the country, of fugitives from Galilee and other borderline districts,

rebellion, ultimately ruined the city; for supplies which might have been adequate for the combatants were squandered upon a useless and idle mob, who in addition to war brought on themselves faction and starvation.

4. Arrest and murder of the leading citizens; the paralyzing terror

(138) Other brigands from the country who slipped into the city and joined the even more formidable gang within, refrained from no enormity henceforth. (139) They did not limit their audacity to raids and brigandage, but proceeded to commit murders, not by night or secretly or against the common people, but openly by day, beginning with the most eminent citizens [*a*]. (140) The first victim whom they seized was Antipas [*b*], a member of the royal family and one of the most influential men in the city who was entrusted also with the public treasury. (141) They seized and imprisoned him. Next came Levias, one of the most eminent men in the city, and Syphas, son of Aregetes, both of royal blood, besides other prominent men throughout the country. (142) Terror filled the people, and as if the enemy had taken the city by storm, no one thought of anything but his own security.

5. (143) The terrorists, however, were not content with imprisoning their captives; (144) they considered it dangerous to keep influential people in custody for long, with numerous households powerful enough to avenge them, and the entire populace might be driven by their outrageous conduct to rise in revolt. (145) Accordingly, they decided to murder their prisoners [*a*] and selected for this purpose the most bloodthirsty assassin among them, a brigand called John, known in their vernacular as the son of Dorcas [*b*]. With ten others he entered the prison with drawn swords which they ran through the prisoners. (146) They justified this monstrous crime with a monstrous lie, alleging that their victims had approached the Romans about surrendering Jerusalem, and had been slain as traitors to their own country. Indeed, they bragged about their audacious crime as if they were benefactors and saviors of the city.

6. (147) In the end, the people were so cowed by abject terror, and the brigands rose to such heights of madness, that they actually took over the appointment of the high priests. (148) Setting aside the families from which the high priests had always been drawn [*c*], they appointed to that office ignoble persons of no family, in order to gain partners in crime; (149) for those who attained the highest dignity without deserving it were necessarily the creatures of the men who put them there. (150) Moreover, they brought the official authorities into collision with each other by various machinations and fabrications, turning the strife of those who might have restrained them to their own advantage; until, sated with the wrongs they had

resulted inevitably in the overthrow of the temporary government which had been assigned to lead the national resistance. Their administration had long been suspect as inept in the eyes of the Zealots and, since they were mostly chosen among Jerusalem's aristocracy, they were probably no more desirable in the eyes of the poor for social and economic reasons. The disasters sustained in Galilee, and their inability to prove of any help, had also raised the suspicion that they would eventually conclude a separate peace with the Romans. Jewish notables, they believed, surrendered Jewish prisoners in Tiberias, Tarichaeae, or Gischala so as to save their own skins. This the Zealots meant to prevent from happening to them, and the only way was to take over.

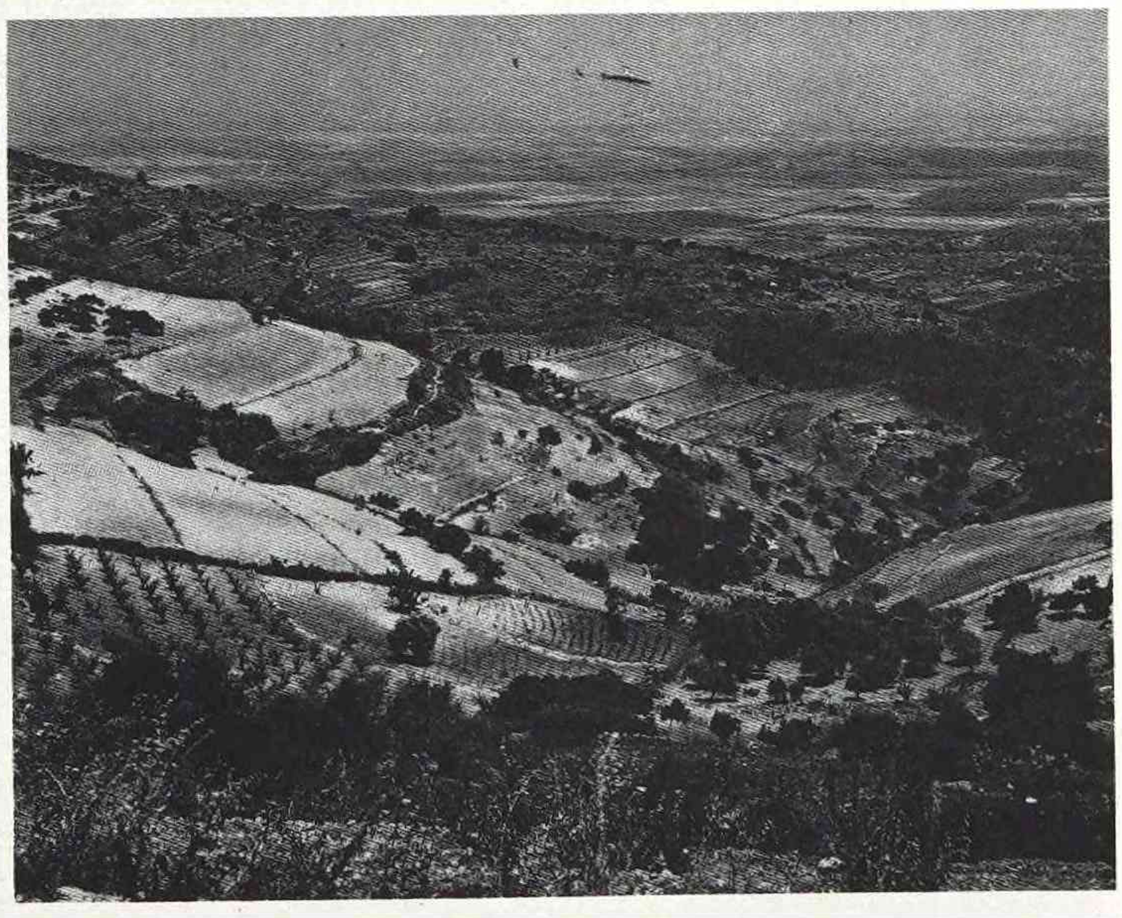
140[*b*] *Antipas,* with two other relatives of King Agrippa II, Saul and Costobar—avowed pacifists and foes of the Zealots—had sought through the king's influence and military intervention to nip the Jewish rebellion in the bud (*War* II, 418); the Zealots had not retaliated after their first victory over the Romans, as he was one of the city's favorites; he stayed on when the others fled (II, 557) and took over the Treasury, despite the opposition of the patriot leader Eleazar, son of Simon (II, 564). No one now believed in his sincerity, and the time had come to eliminate him and his followers.

145[*a*] The murder of prominent prisoners, paralleled in other political and social revolutions, was not justified by the Zealots' pretext that these Jews intended to surrender Jerusalem to the Romans, and there was no proof of same, as explained by the author.

145[*b*] John, son of Dorcas, which meant "gazelle" in the Aramaic vernacular (cf. Acts 9, 36).

148[*c*] *Been drawn* The reference is to the presumed limitation of the high priesthood to a few privileged priestly families, to chief priests, or to the heads of priestly "clans" (cf. 155b below) all related to the Temple organization. But Josephus does not differentiate between them in his dissertation. During the first century AD and in Herod's time, prior rights to the high priesthood were the privilege of such families as *Boetus, Hanan, Phiabi, Kimchit,* and members of these families were dubbed "high priests" or "sons of high priests." In any case, the limitation of such families to the august position is highly debatable, and Josephus, who was himself of priestly descent, did not present the issue objectively. The law of succession to the high priesthood, in any one priestly family, was *not absolute.* Several instances of election from different families are known. Moreover, many Talmudic sages believed that the inheritance of the high priest implied no more than the right of the scion of a high priestly family to be nominated, and not his automatic election.

The "country population" from the mountain country to the coast was involved in revolution

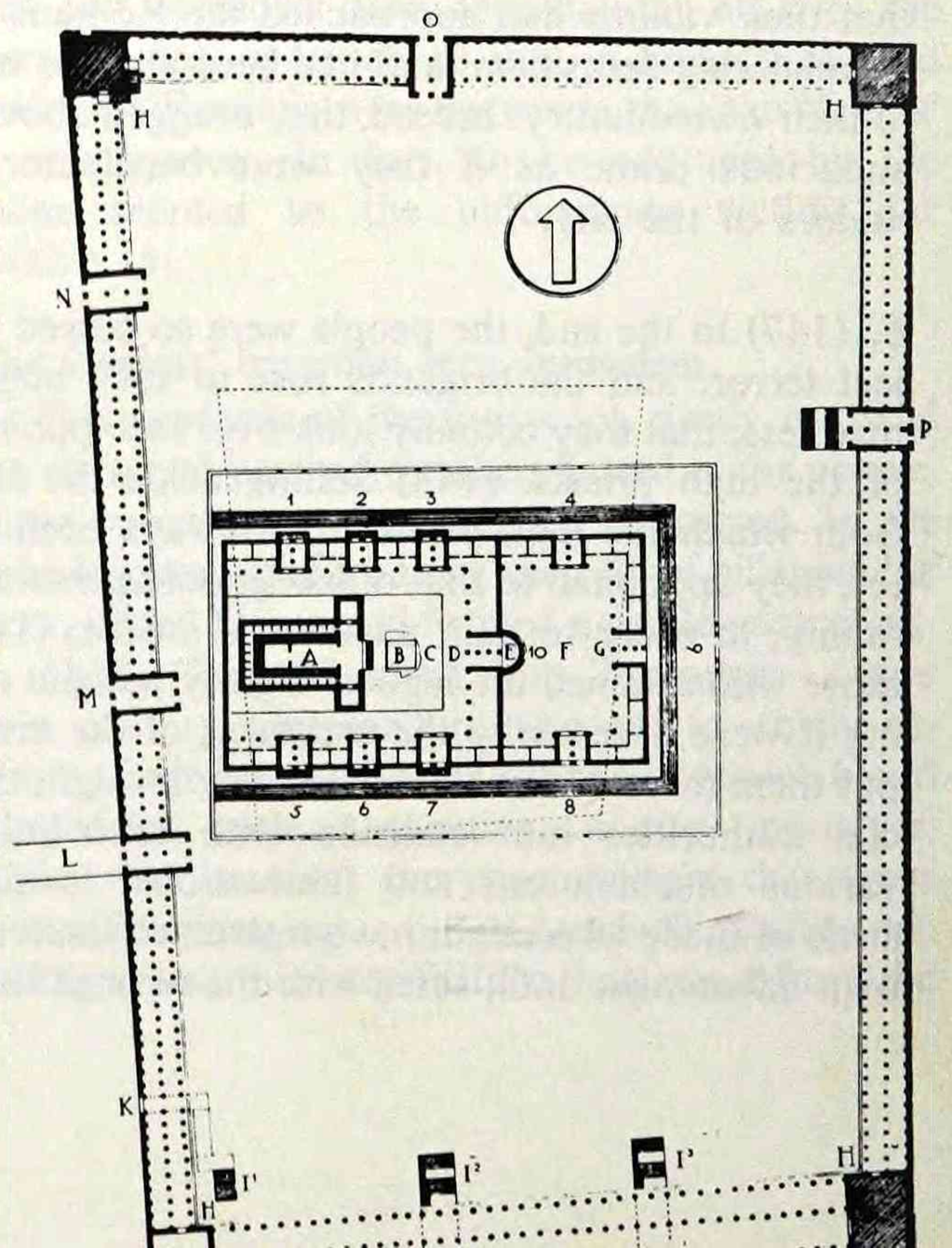


done against men, they transferred their insolence to the Deity and entered the sanctuary with their feet polluted [*d*].

7. Insurrection against the Zealots; selection of the high priests by lot

(151) The people at length rose in insurrection, urged on by Ananus, the senior of the chief priests [*a*], a man of the soundest judgment who might possibly have saved the city had he escaped the hands of the plotters [*b*]. At this threat these men converted the Temple of God into their stronghold and refuge from popular upheavals, and made the Holy Place the center for their tyranny. (152) To these horrors was added a vein of ironic pretense more galling than the actions themselves. (153) For, to test the abject submissiveness of the people and to prove their own power, they dared to appoint the high priests by lot, though, as we said before, the succession [*a*] was hereditary. (154) Their pretext for this arrangement was ancient custom; they asserted that in the old days the high priesthood had been conferred by lot. In reality, this was the abrogation of the regular practice and a trick to consolidate their power by gaining control over the appointments.

8. (155) They summoned, accordingly, one of the high priestly clans called Eniachin [*b*], and drew lots for a high priest. By chance the lot fell to one who represented the clearest proof of their lawlessness. He was a man called Phanni [*c*], son of Samuel, from the village of Aphthia, a man not only not descended from high priests, but who was such a boor that he scarcely knew what the high priesthood meant [*d*]. (156) At all events, they dragged their reluctant victim out of the countryside and, costuming him for his assumed part, like an actor on the stage, they put on him the sacred vestments and instructed him how to act as the occa-



Presumed layout of the Temple Mount according to L. H. Vincent. 1-8: Chambers around the Inner Courts, within the Ḥel Rampart; q: The Ḥel; A: sanctuary; B: altar; C: court of priests; D: court of Israel; E, 10: Nikanor Gate and stairs; F-G: women's court; H: halls or reservoirs. I1: upper exit of a ramp that led to the Temple esplanade from K, Kiphonos Gate; I2: upper exit from the Double Hulda Gate; I3: upper exit from the Triple Hulda Gate; J: gate from the Robinson Arch reached through an outer stairway; L: gate over the Wilson Arch and end of the causeway spanning the Gyropoeon valley: M: fourth gate (described in Book V); N: presumed other gate; O: Tadi Gate in the north. The thick black dots on the outskirts indicate the Portico colonnades; the entrance ramps ran under the porticoes. The Soreg *or outer balustrade is indicated by the outer rectangle in the center of the upper esplanade. The thinly dotted line indicates the restored podium (in the center of the esplanade, and over the Ḥel, on which the Arabs built their sanctuary, arcades, etc.); P: the Susa Gate in the east*

150[*d*] *Their polluted feet* compares the Zealots to gentiles who were not allowed to set foot in the Temple precincts, and because their feet were bathed, as it were, in the blood they had spilt there.

151[*a*] The beginning of this section does not fit in, at this point, with the course of events in the succeeding paragraphs, since it forecasts developments described in para. 159–162ff.

151[*b*] *The hands of the plotters* anticipates later events, namely, the eventual execution of Ananus related in later pages.

153[*a*] Cf. 151 [*a*].

155[*b*], [*c*] The *clans Eniachin* and *Phanni* (Phinehas) of the village of Aphtia. The clan in the Temple organization was the division of the priestly families in 24 "courses" or "watches," augmented by 24 watches of ordinary "Israelites." Josephus himself belonged to the first of the 24 priestly "watches," the clan of Jehoiarib (*Life* 2), and maintained that this division into 24 families continued to his day. The origin of the clan Eniachin is unknown.

155[*d*] *The election of a high priest* Our knowledge of contemporary usage throws a different light on this issue, and it varies from the author's biased statement. The high priesthood had been taken away from the family of the Sons of Zadok, the original line which headed the sacerdotal hierarchy since the days of the Judean monarchy in the First Temple days and up to the time of King Antiochus; then, from the House of the Hasmoneans (who had been appointed high priests by the people). After this "there was certainly a case for denouncing all the high priests that followed them, and disqualifying them as commoners who had risen to high office by the (unprincipled) desire of the house of Herod and the Roman governors, and not by the right of ancestral succession" (G. Alon, *ibid.*, p. 70). "Possibly the Zealots, although they based themselves in choosing Phinehas as a high priest by lot on an ancient Halakha, acted as they did because they disqualified these high priests for the reason stated" (J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem,* Pt. II, p. 54). The Zealots may have proclaimed that the families from which the high priests were appointed in the past years were not legal, whereas Phinehas was of the sons of Zaddok, to whom they restored the high priesthood. But it is not stated in the sources that Phinehas was of the house of Zaddok. In any case, he did not belong to the priestly houses appointed by Herod, and later rulers were anathema to the Zealots. We learn from the story of Phinehas of Aphtia, both from Josephus and early Talmudic (Tannaitic) sources, that it was the priests who appointed him, and that they relied on an ancient custom. This appointment, however, was by lot. In sum, Phinehas' election was not done in completely arbitrary fashion.

159[*a*] The decision of the Zealots to democratize this election—whether or not they were considered competent in this matter—moved the heads of the temporary government, the Sanhedrin and the national assembly, to quick action. Various prominent leaders and teachers concurred, among them Joseph ben Gorion, Ananus (Hanan ben Hanan, cf.

sion demanded. (157) To them this sacrilege was a subject for jests and ribald mirth, but the other priests, watching this mockery of their law from a distance, burst into tears and bemoaned the degradation of the sacred rites.

9. Rise of popular indignation

(158) This last outrage was more than the people could bear. One and all, they were aroused to bring tyranny to an end. (159) Their best leaders of excellent repute, [*a*] like Gorion, son of Joseph [*b*], and Simeon [*c*], son of Gamaliel, appealed publicly to the whole assembly and canvassed privately, door-to-door, to urge the people to act now and punish the wreckers of freedom, and purge the sanctuary of its guilty polluters. (160) Their efforts were supported by the most outstanding among the high priests, Jesus, son of Gamalas [*d*], and Ananus, son of Ananus [*e*] who held meetings at which they vehemently reproached the people for their apathy, and spurred them on against the Zealots. (161) For "Zealots" they called themselves, as if they were zealous for a good cause and not for all that was evil beyond belief.

10. The general assembly; Ananus' oration against terror

(162) And now the multitude were summoned to a general assembly [*a*], where indignation was unanimously expressed at the invasion of the sanctuary, at

160[*e*]) and probably the famous Pharisee Rabbi Simeon ben Gamaliel the Elder (grandson of Rabbi Hillel, also known in Acts 5, 33-34 as the man who defended Jesus' disciples, and who was Paul's master; 22, 3).

159[*b*] *Gorion, son of Joseph,* may be Joseph son of Gorion, who with Ananus (Hanan) headed the temporary government in Jerusalem at the onset of the war (*War* II, 563). He bears his grandfather's name.

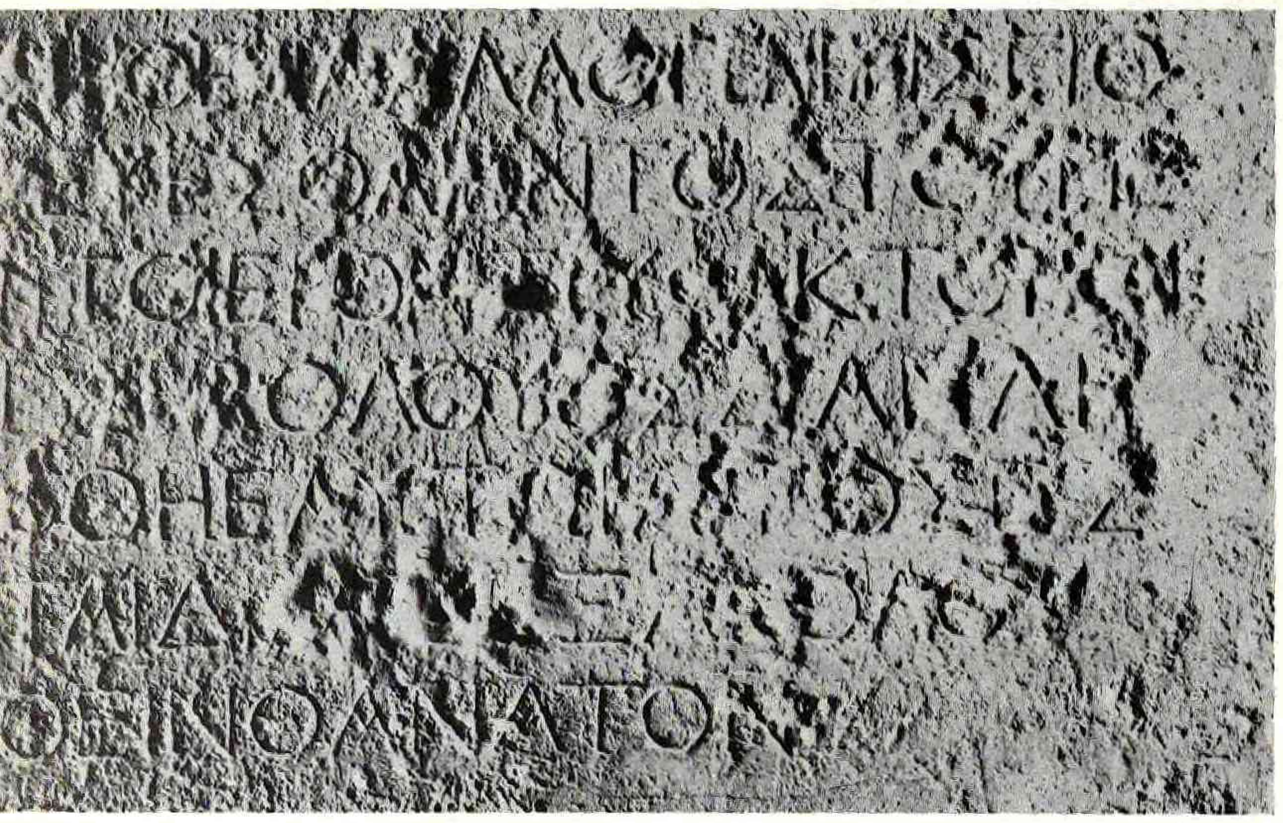
159[*c*] *Rabbi Simeon, son of Gamaliel* (according to J. N. Simhoni, Josephus' commentator of *War,* and *Commentary,* Hebrew, Tel Aviv, p. 470) took a leading part in the struggle with the Zealots; but even if he did so, this proves that he wanted to defend the statutory rule of the Sanhedrin and the security of the people against the extremist Zealots. On the other hand, he did not wish to submit to the Romans, who eventually executed him. It is therefore doubtful whether he was an active participant in the present crisis. The final act that led to civil war was, according to Josephus, the arbitrary selection of Phinehas of Kefar Aphtia as a high priest. But it happened that this man was the son-in-law of Rabbi Simeon ben Gamaliel (or of Rabban Gamaliel, his father, cf. Tosefta Yoma, 1,5). "When we abandon misleading comparisons, we must come to the conclusion that the Pharisees were divided at that time over the question of the war: some followed the path of Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai (the famous Pharisaic leader and pacifist, cf. note to *War* VI, 615[*f*] while there were others who refused to make peace with Caesar and remained in Jerusalem until its destruction" (G. Alon, *ibid.,* p. 337).

160[*d*] *Jesus (Yehoshua) son of Gamalas* who befriended Josephus, according to *Life,* 193, 204, was a scion of the priestly family of Boetus.

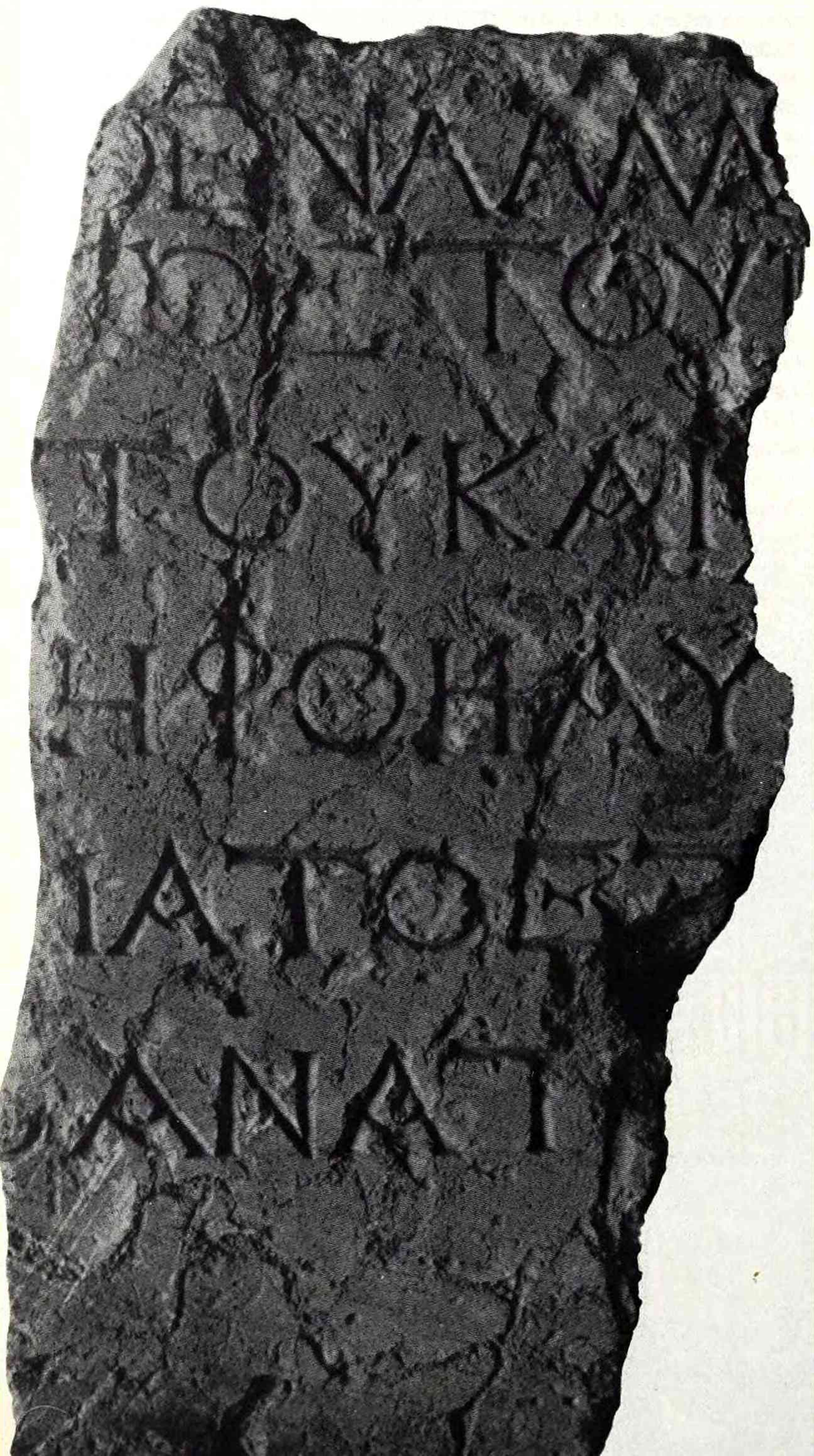
160[*e*] *Ananus, son of Ananus,* ex-high priest who had been entrusted with the defense of Jerusalem (*War* II, 647 ff.), was a collaborator of Rabbi Simeon ben Gamaliel. His famous oration is given below, 162 ff.

162[*a*] *The general assembly* referred to may have been the *Kneseth Hagedola,* a three-hundred-year-old national institution (numbering 120 or 85 members) founded by *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* (8–10; *Maccabees* 14, 28), which met on extraordinary occasions to advise and legislate on matters of urgent import. At this moment, the former high priests and the leaders listed above joined hands to oppose the Zealot terror which

"Henceforth the Temple must be regarded as a citadel" (172). Presumed reconstruction of the western part of the Temple Mount (by M. Avi-Yonah's model at the Holyland Hotel, Jerusalem). This emphasizes its impregnable character. The entire enclosure of the inner courts and of the court of women was protected by a massive retaining wall (the Ḥel) and served effectively during the last great war described in these pages. The central structure is the Temple proper, and the long structure, on the right, which borders the area is the Royal Portico described in V, 190 ff.



The Romans and other foreigners never stepped beyond the balustrade that separated the outer courts from the inner courts of the Temple Mount, as attested by the two stone tables written in Greek (Cf. War V, 194; Acts 21, 31 ff.), one of them found in Jerusalem (below), the other in the Museum of Istanbul



the looting and murders. But no countermeasures had yet been taken due to a well-founded belief that the Zealots would be very difficult to dislodge. Ananus stood up in front of the audience, and turning often to face the Temple with his eyes filled with tears, spoke as follows [*b*]: (163) "It would have been better for me to have died before I had seen the house of God filled with such abominations and its unapproachable and hallowed precincts trodden by the feet of murderers! (164) Yet I, who wear vestments of a high priest and answer to the most honored of venerated names, am alive and holding on tightly to life, instead of facing a death which would shed glory on my old age. And if it must be, then I will go alone, and, as if in solitude, I shall dedicate my single life in the cause of God. (165) What is the use of living among a people dulled to calamities, no longer capable of coping with their troubles? When plundered you put up with it, when beaten you are silent, when you witness murder you do not even dare to groan aloud. (166) What unbearable tyranny! But why blame the tyrants? Have they not been created by you and your forbearance? (167) Was it not you who, through your passivity, allowed those first recruits to unite, when they were still a mere handful? You swelled their numbers by your silence, and by standing idly by while they were arming, you turned those arms against yourselves? (168) You should have nipped their attacks in the bud when they were pouring abuses upon your leaders. Instead, by your utter indifference, you encouraged these scoundrels to plunder. Then, when houses were ransacked, nothing in any way was said; so they seized their owners too; and when these were dragged through the center of the city, no one raised a finger to defend them. (169) Next they flung into jail the men you have betrayed. I will not say how many of them or of what character, but though they were neither charged nor condemned, they were imprisoned without a man coming to their rescue. (170) The natural consequence was that these same men were seen put to death. We have witnessed this spectacle; they were like a herd of dumb cattle from which prize victims were in turn dragged to be slaughtered; yet not a voice was heard nor a hand raised! (171) Suffer, I say, when you see your sanctuary trampled underfoot; you yourselves built every step up which these profane wretches have climbed so insolently. Do not complain if they have reached the top. Indeed, by now they would undoubtedly have reached still greater heights if there had been anything greater than the sanctuary to destroy!

(172) "Well, they have seized the strongest point in the city—for henceforth the Temple must be regarded as a citadel or fortress; but with such a tyrants' stronghold established within your walls, with the spectacle of your enemy entrenched above your heads, what plans do you have, and what hopes brace your minds? (173) Will you wait for the Romans to restore our holy places? Have things come to such a

pass in the city, are we so sunk in misery, that even enemies must commiserate with us? (174) Will you never rise, you spineless creatures, and turn to meet the blows and, as even beasts do, strike back at your tormentors? Why don't you remember your own personal miseries and, seeing before your eyes what you have suffered, whet your appetite for revenge upon them? (175) Have you really lost the most honorable, the most deeply rooted passion—the longing for liberty? Have we come to love slavery? Are we devoted to our tyrants as though submission were a heritage from our ancestors? (176) No, they sustained many a mighty struggle for independence and yielded neither to Egyptian nor to Median [*c*] domination in their determination to disobey a conqueror's commands. (177) But why should I speak of the deeds of our ancestors? We are now at war with Rome. I refrain from inquiring whether this war is profitable or advantageous, or the opposite, but what is its object? Is it not freedom? (178) If, then, we refuse to yield to the masters of the world, shall we put up with our own people when they behave like tyrants? (179) Yet subservience to a foreign power might be attributed to the present crushing blow of fortune, but servility to villains of one's own country would indicate deliberate degradation.

(180) "Now that I have mentioned the Romans, I will make no secret of the thought which occurred to me while I was speaking and turned my mind in their direction. I mean that even if we should be vanquished—God forbid that we shall—we could suffer no worse treatment than that to which these men have subjected us. (181) Is there no reason for tears when on the one hand we see votive offerings of the Romans in the Temple, and, on the other, the spoils of our countrymen who have plundered and massacred the nobility of our capital, murdering people whom even the Romans would have spared after their victory? (182) The Romans never stepped beyond the bounds set for foreigners [*d*], never transgressed any of our sacred customs, but reverently gazed from afar at the walls that enclosed our sanctuary; (183) yet men born in this country, brought up according to our customs and called Jews, strut where they like over the inner sanctuary, with hands still reeking with the blood of

would not even hesitate to murder high priests. The clash culminated in civil war and worse terror, which led to the eventual defeat.

162[*b*] *Ananus' speech,* as reported by Josephus, is one of the finest orations in *War,* both in composition and content. It is a measure of the reign of terror that engulfed the Holy City and was intended primarily by Ananus to channel the people's sense of freedom against the armed fist of the Zealots (termed "assassins" in *Mishna Sota* 9, 9), and to fan the religious feeling of the people and their devotion to the Temple against the Zealots who had seized it and made it their stronghold. It may also have subtly insinuated a pacifist note, namely, a possible truce with Rome as an alternative to Zealot tyranny.

176[*c*] *Median* refers to the Persian conquest of Babylon and Media by King Cyrus. "Assyrian" or "Babylonian" would have been more apt adjectives here, because they had actually dominated Israel.

182[*d*] Referring to the stone balustrade which separated the outer courts (the "permitted areas" to foreigners) from the inner courts of the Temple, with its warning inscription in Greek and Latin forbidding gentiles to pass under pain of death (as illustrated; *War* V, 193). Most Romans observed the rule, but conquerors like Pompey and Titus penetrated the holy precinct (*War* I, 152; VI, 260; *Against Apion* II, 82).

A prisoner of Rome

The "Median" domination mentioned in para. 176 actually refers to the Babylonian capture of the cities of Judaea and Jerusalem, 654 years previously. This is illustrated by an Assyrian bas-relief of the siege of Lachish, which preceded the fall of Jerusalem

190[*a*] *Upon them* As at Gamla cf. 76.

201[*a*] *The pavements* of the ascending ramps which led from the outer stairways and gates to the outer courts of the wide esplanade of the Temple, and the pavements of the inner courts (see diagram of the Temple Mount). The entrances and pavements were accessible to the worshippers day and night.

201[*b*] *Defiled the sanctuary* Josephus, who was particularly inclined, out of conviction, to portray the Zealots as wicked desecrators of the Temple and its sanctities, qualified unctuously and with sophisticated cunning the Council and the Sanhedrin. We will come across other examples of this ambiguous attitude as the tragic story of defeat unfolds (*War* V, chapter 1 to 13 and VI) and try to explain its sources. As G. Alon put it, Josephus' blame of the Zealots and rationalization over the defeat was not altogether severe and sincere. "He unwillingly (or possibly, even willingly?) through many slips of the pen, tells us the truth.... It may well be that, were it possible to evade the dread censorship of the Caesars, Josephus would not hesitate to give clandestine expression to his residual national feelings, which as a rule were submerged in his servile spirit" (G. Alon, *ibid.*, p. 268). This refers to the circumstances under which he penned his great work in Rome.

Wide stairway leading to the Double Hulda Gate, which is walled up
1 *(center) and intersected by the later wall (left)*

their countrymen! (184) In view of that, can anyone dread war with the foreigner, with enemies who by comparison are kinder to us than our own people? Why, if we are to call things by their right names, we might well find the Romans are the champions of our laws, while their enemies are within the walls of the city!

(185) "I am sure that you were convinced when you left home that the plotters against our liberty are abominable beyond words; and for what they have done no one could devise a fitting punishment. No doubt before I spoke to you, you were driven to fury because of the sufferings you had to bear. (186) Possibly most of you are terrified by their numbers and by their temerity, and also by the advantage they derive from their position. (187) But these are the results of your apathy, and they will grow worse if you procrastinate. Indeed their numbers are increasing daily since scoundrels tend to join other scoundrels. (188) Their temerity is inflamed by the utter absence of any opposition; and they will naturally avail themselves of their position and prepare for attack if we give them time. (189) But rest assured that if we go over to the offensive, they will be humbled by their own guilty conscience, and their advantage of superior position will be cancelled out by reflection. (190) Perhaps the Deity they have outraged will turn their missiles back upon them [*a*], and the ungodly wretches will die by their own weapons. (191) We have only to face them boldly and they are finished! Even if some danger is involved, it will be better to die before the sacred gates, and to sacrifice our lives, if not for our wives and our children, then for God and His Temple. (192) I will help you both with head and hand; I will do everything I can think of to secure your safety, and you will not see me spare myself."

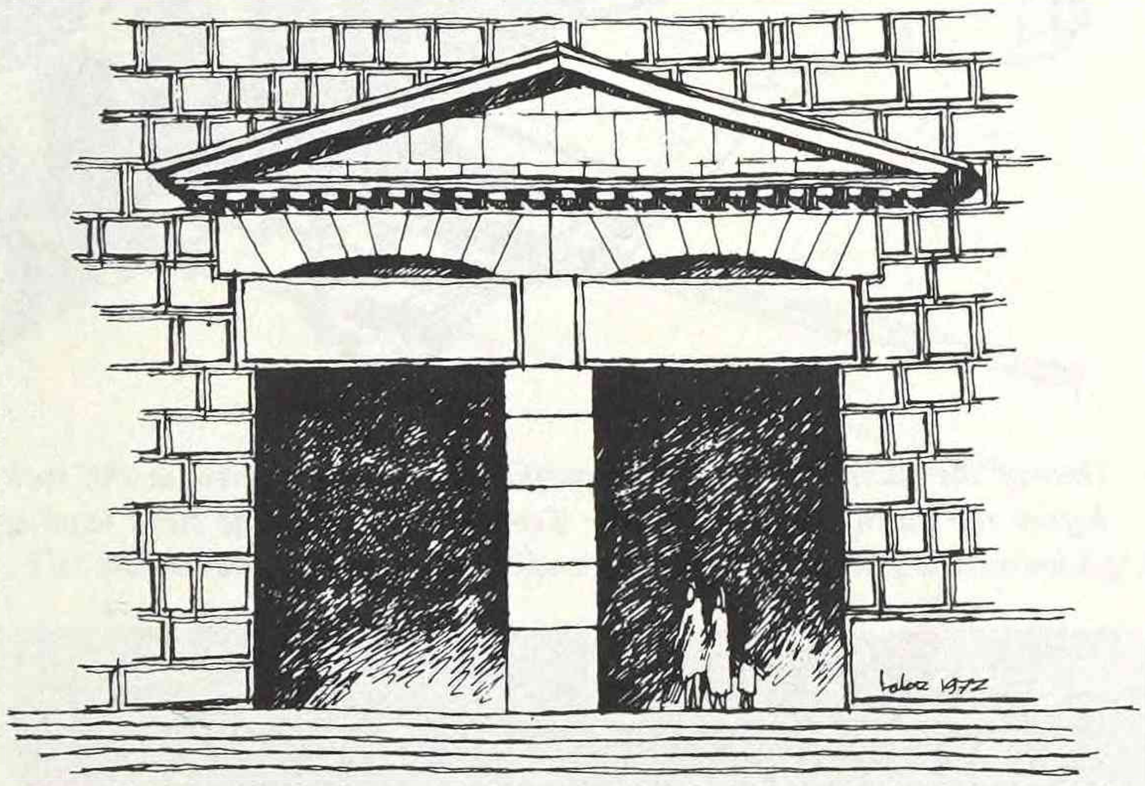
11. The Zealots attacked by Ananus and the citizenry

(193) That is how Ananus inflamed the people against the Zealots. He well knew how difficult it would be to overcome them, numerous, young, and intrepid as they were, but above all because of their obstinacy and troubled conscience. Despairing of being pardoned for what they had done, they would never surrender to the end. (194) Nevertheless, Ananus preferred to undergo any hardship rather than allow such anarchy to continue. (195) The people, too, clamored for him to lead them in an attack upon their foes, and every man was ready to brave any danger.

12. Internecine fighting

(196) But while Ananus was addressing the people, and enlisting and marshalling suitable recruits, the Zealots heard of the projected attack—for word was brought to them by informers of all that the people were doing. Furious, they charged out of the Temple in large and small units, sparing no one they encountered. (197) The citizens' forces were quickly mustered by Ananus; though superior in numbers,

they were far inferior to the Zealots in training and equipment. However, passion made up for the deficiencies on both sides. (198) Those living in the city were fortified with the rage more powerful than weapons, while those centered in the Temple were armed with a recklessness outweighing superiority in numbers. (199) The former were convinced that it would be impossible to live in the city unless the brigands were eradicated; the Zealots believed that unless they triumphed, they would be spared no punishment. (200) Thus, swayed by passion, they joined battle. They began by pelting each other with stones from all parts of the city and before the Temple and by hurling javelins at long range. When one side retired, the victors used their swords. The slaughter on both sides was appalling and multitudes were wounded. (201) The injured on the people's side were carried into the houses by their relatives; while any Zealot who was hit climbed up into the Temple enclosure, staining the sacred pavement with his blood [*a*]. It may be said that their blood alone defiled the sanctuary [*b*]. (202) In these encounters the sorties of



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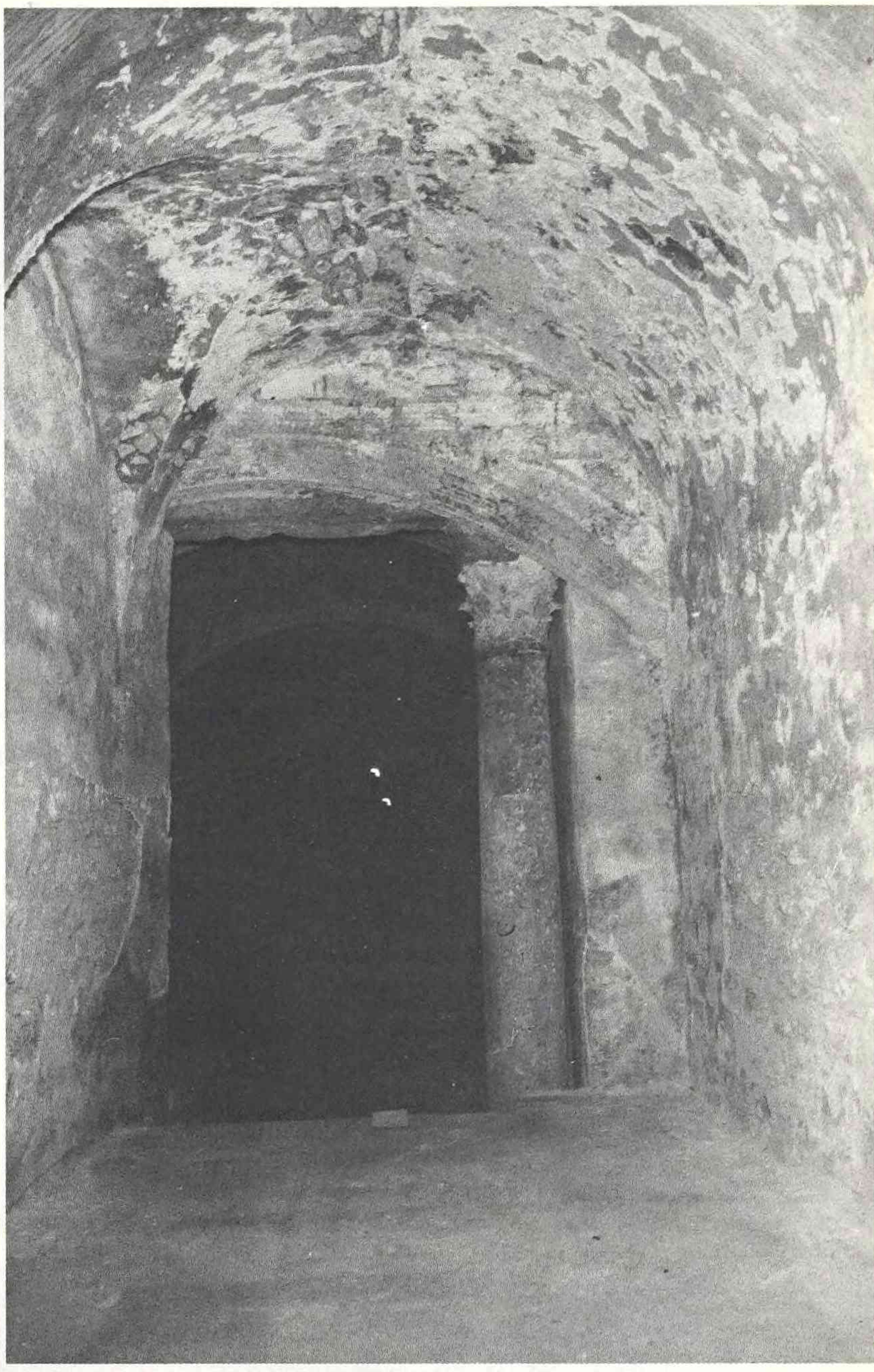
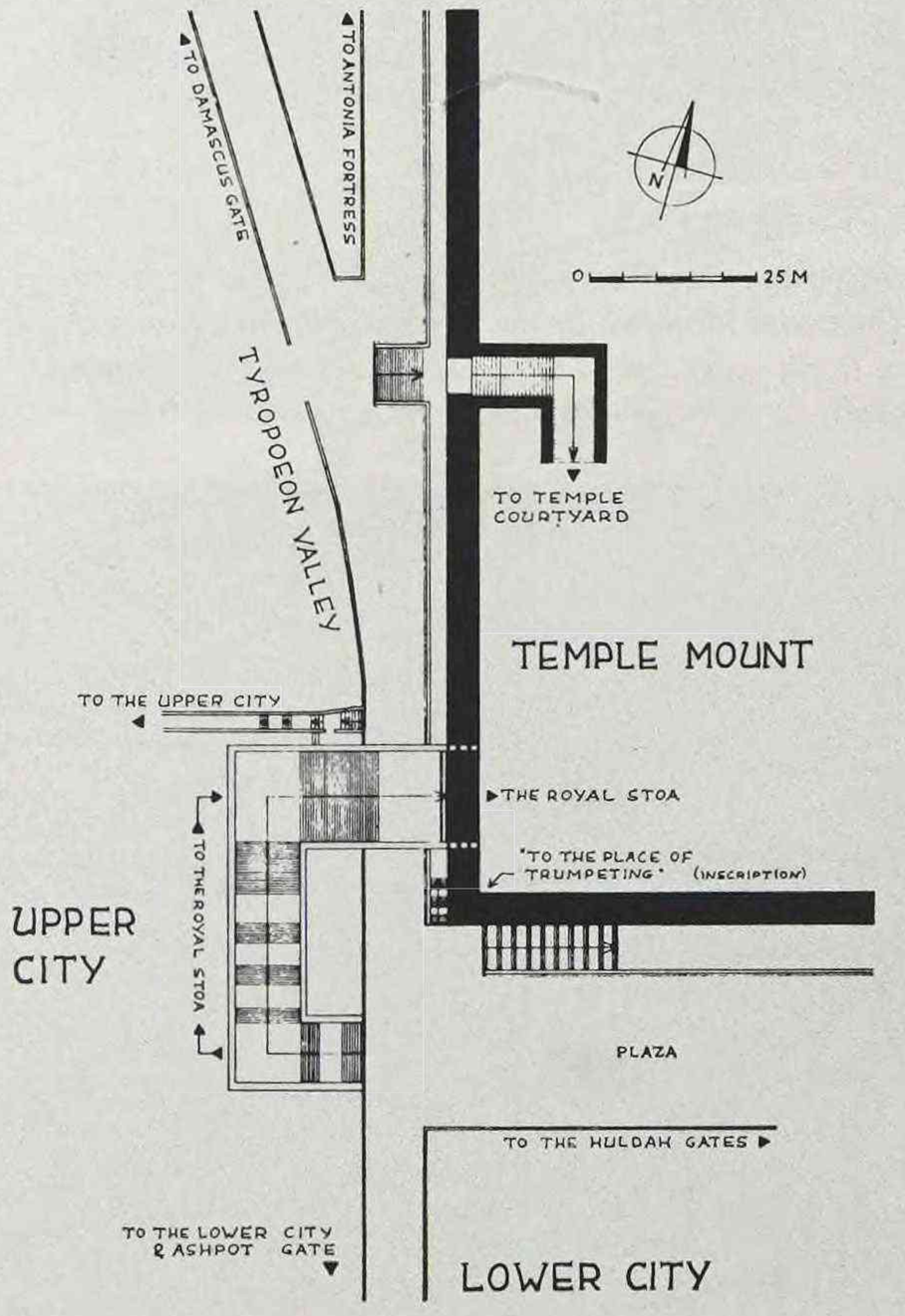


3

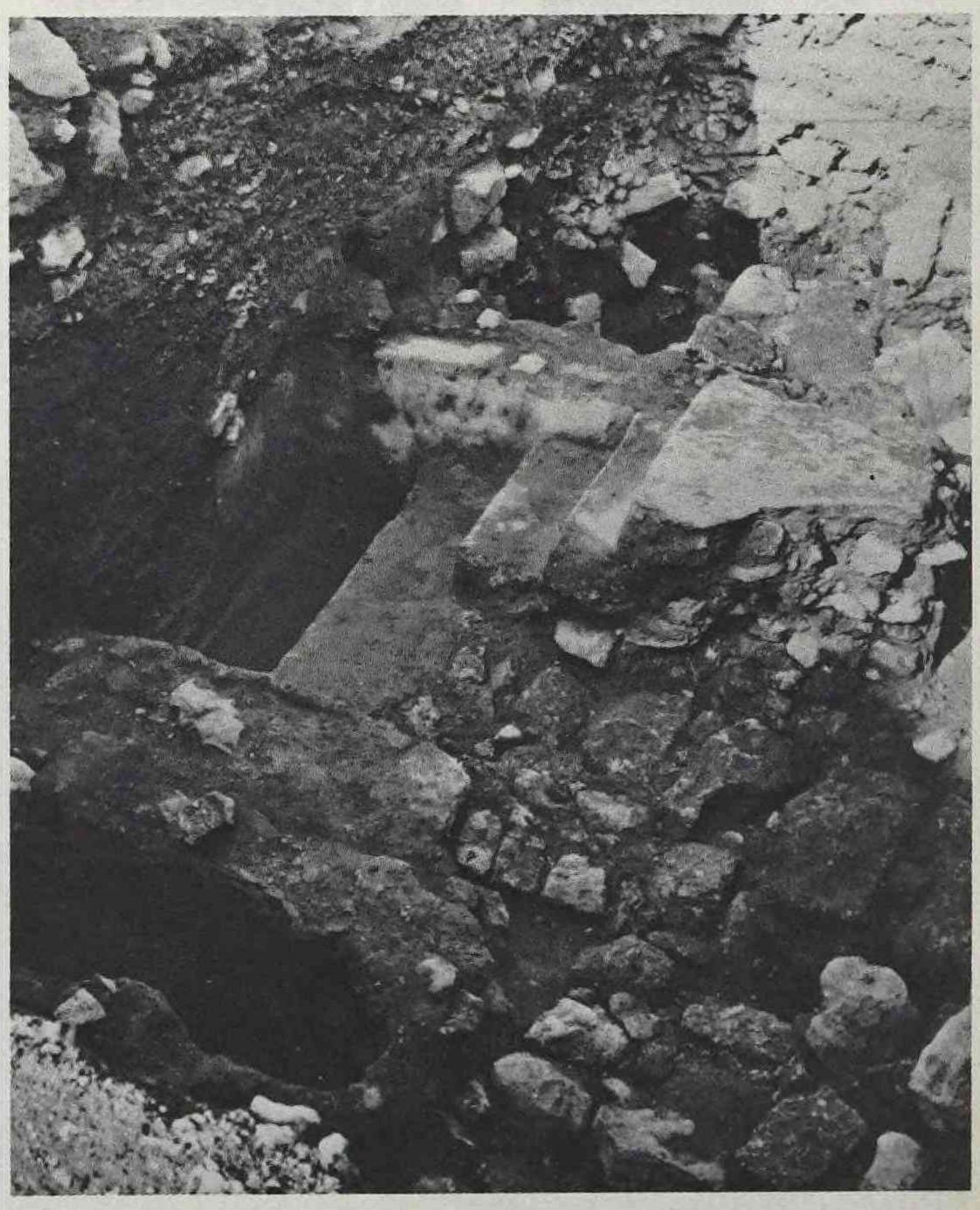
The outer courts mentioned in para. 204 are shown in the plan and itemized description shown on pages 272-273. (1) One such court is identified by the stairs shown on the previous page, namely the Double Hulda Gate, also identified by the reconstruction diagram (2). (3) Underground inner, columned, vaulted structures leading from the Hulda Gate to the outer courts of the Temple Mount by a mounting ramp starting at the Hulda Gate. (4) The Triple Hulda Gate, which led equally to the upper esplanade by a mounting ramp

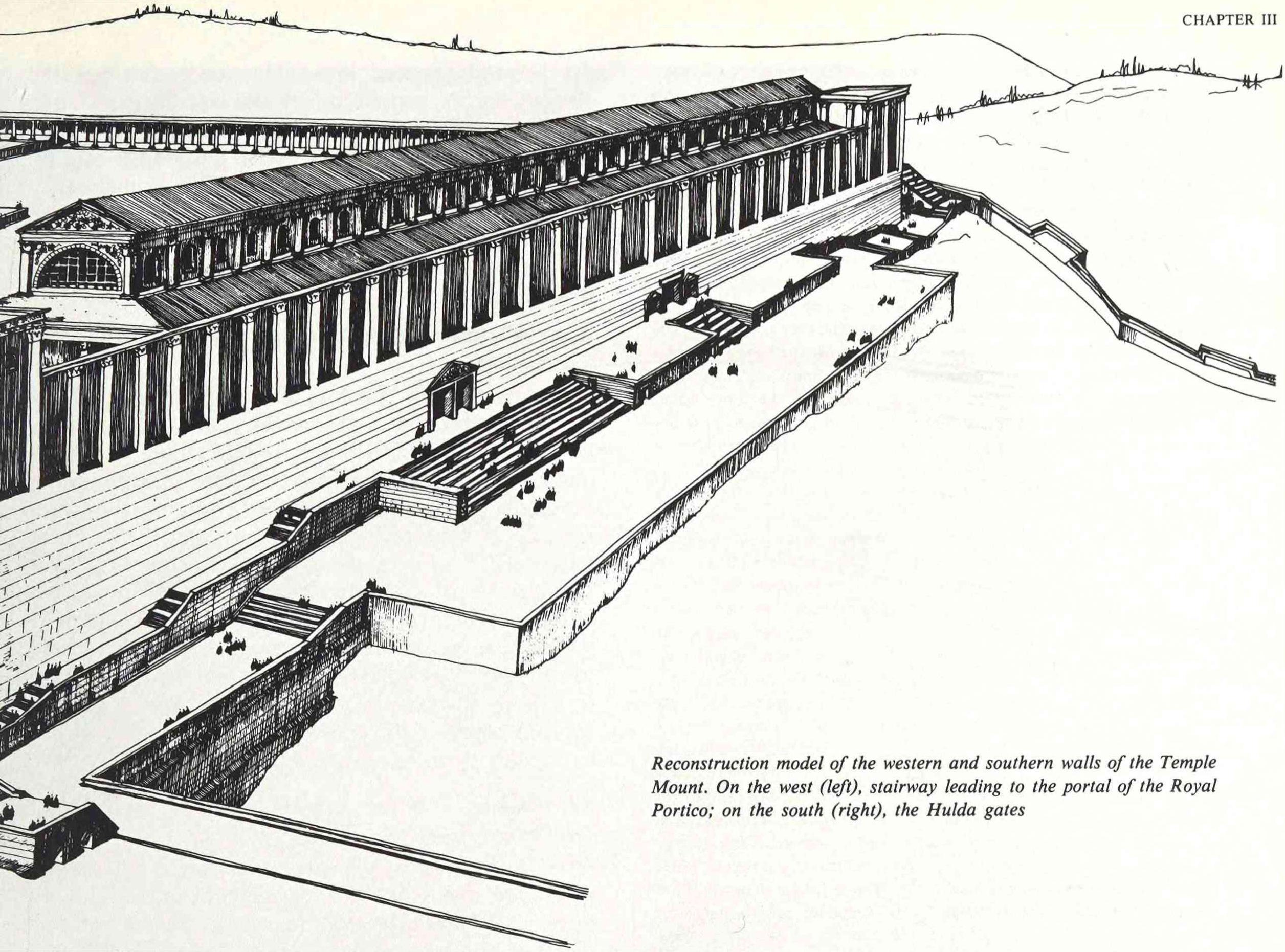
4

Plan of the southwest corner of the Temple Mount and the steps rising to the Royal Portico over Robinson's Arch (above and the plan below)



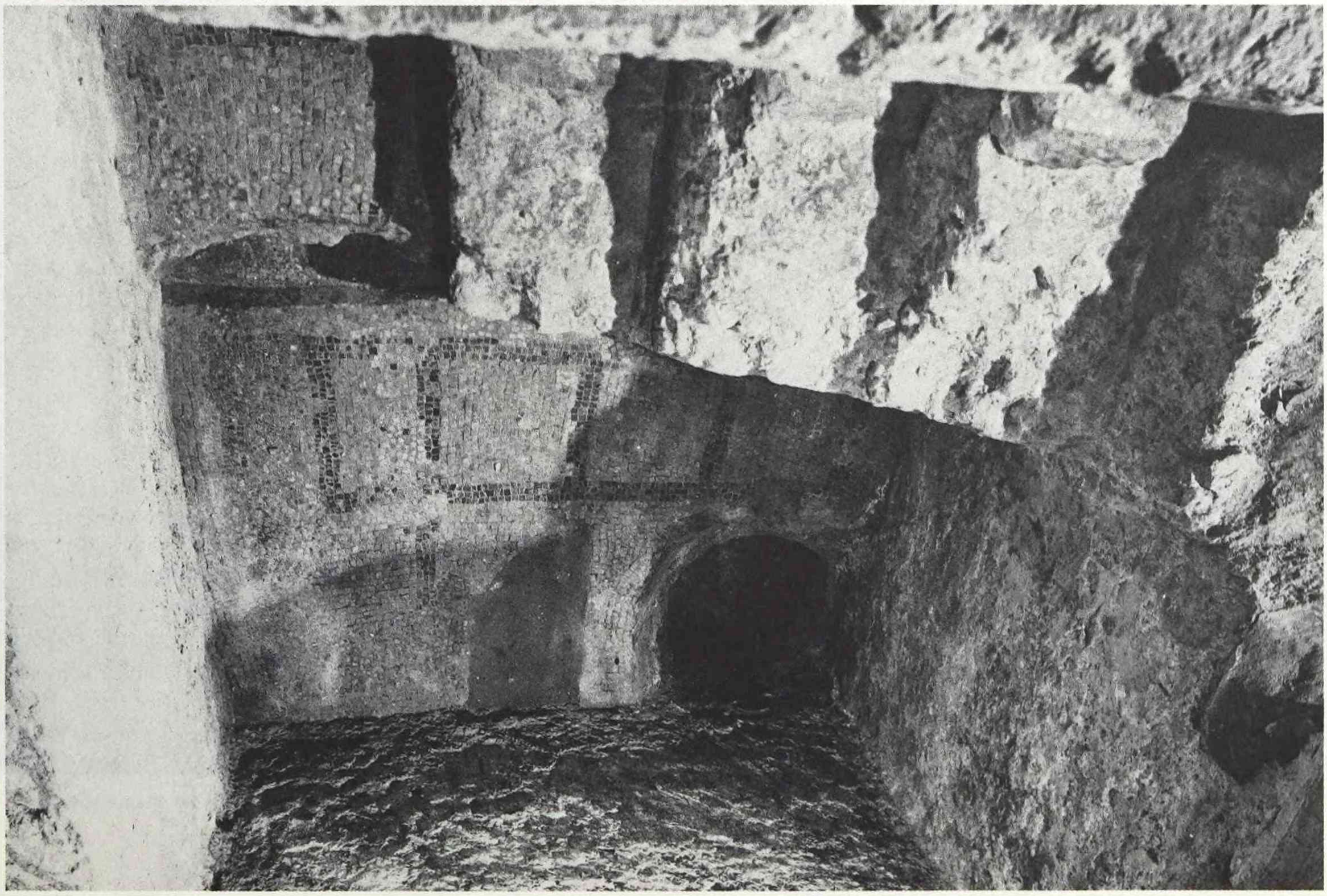
One of the numerous mikvehs *(purification baths) carved in the rock before the entrances to the outer Temple gates, and the steps leading down to the purification font*





Reconstruction model of the western and southern walls of the Temple Mount. On the west (left), stairway leading to the portal of the Royal Portico; on the south (right), the Hulda gates

The mikveh *situated in the basement of the home of Joseph, husband of Mary, in the village of Nazareth, featuring the stairs that led to the font*



204[*c*] See diagrams of the outer courts, bordered by the outer gates and supporting walls and, leading further in, the intermediate *soreg* (balustrade) intended to bar foreigners from going beyond; then, closer to the Temple, the rampart which surrounded and protected the inner courts (center of diagram p. 345 and diagram p. 357, Book V).

204[*d*] The *gates* referred to in the text relate to those which led to the inner sacred courts reserved for worshippers, priests, to the chambers, and the sanctuary proper (diagram p. 357, Book V).

205[*a*] *The imperative of 'purification'. Its relation to sound strategy* The laws of ritual purity explicitly forbade Jews from entering the Temple precincts unless they immersed previously in a *mikveh* (cold purification bath) and thereby removed any contamination they contracted. The excavations at the southern foot of the Temple Mount have revealed a number of mikvehs, pools and plastered cisterns, hewn out of bedrock, which served the worshippers before they entered the outer gates. *Ananus,* a priest and a Sadducee who esteemed the law of sanctity above any other consideration, political or military, placed himself and his people's army at a most serious disadvantage by refusing to rush the Zealots beyond the gates. The latter, no less pious, were not as rigid; they considered that the end justified the means and preferred, therefore, the security that the sanctuary offered them. We have already seen (*War* I, 145–149) that the interdictions of the Torah and the *halakhot* (ordinances) overrode personal and collective considerations, and Hanan threw away his chances of victory by hewing the hard line. The modern reader must try to empathize with the archaic religious laws which governed ancient Israel in order to appreciate the motivations and the Jewish taboos of those days. One example is cited above. Another is a taboo over pagans entering the precincts of the Temple (182[*d*]). The great antiquity of the *halakhot* on purification and sanctification, on food observances, tithes (a levy of the tenth part) and religious offerings, and their powerful hold on the life of the nation, is evident from the tradition prohibiting non-Jews entering the Temple precincts beyond the *soreg* (balustrade), and it emanates from the ascription of uncleanliness to gentiles (or Jews who had transgressed or been defiled or contaminated), while the prohibition arose from the fear of defilement. These taboos evolved from ancient Pentateuchal laws of Levitical purity. When the original cause of the prohibition was forgotten, new reasons were invented to perpetuate it as though it had become an instinctive reflex, which set Jews apart from gentiles.

206[*b*] *The portico* colonnades abutted the great walls from within and surrounded the vast esplanade of the Temple area (see diagram). Ananus' men prevented the Zealots from climbing to the portico roofs and attacking them. The Zealots had barricaded themselves in the inner courts shown in the diagram.

208[*a*] This is related in *War* IV, 106ff.

208[*b*] *Against the state* John of Gischala's characterization is reminiscent of *War* IV, 85.

210[*c*] *Popular party* Josephus tried to blame John of Gischala for all the calamities that befell Jerusalem. Though not directly involved in the internecine struggles, John apparently found no difficulty in assuming a neutral role as a Galilean outsider and a friend of Ananus who was appreciative of his past military record in Galilee. He was equally a friend of Rabbi Simon ben Gamaliel and generally *persona grata* among the Zealots for his fighting spirit and hatred of the Romans. Therefore, although Josephus' estimate seems highly prejudiced, John may have played a vital role in the civil war, and he meant to rehabilitate himself at the expense of both parties to this war, and their destruction.

213[*d*] The *Council* or *Boule:* the executive authority of the city situated outside the Temple area; or, alternatively, the national council responsible for public security.

215[*e*] Slaughter and spilling of blood in the Temple precincts, and the consequent presence of dead bodies, were taboo, as explained in 205[*a*] above.

216[*a*] John's incitement of the Zealot leaders, as recorded here, is what Josephus *imagined* it to have been. But he was neither a confidant of the Zealots at the time nor is it likely that he could have met any of the people who took part, or were witnesses of this historic session.

the brigands proved invariably successful; but the citizens' forces, roused to fury and steadily growing in numbers, heaped abuse on those who gave way, while those who tried to run away were pushed forward by others pressing forward from the rear. Finally they turned their whole force upon the Zealots. (203) The latter, unable to withstand this onslaught, slowly withdrew into the Temple, Ananus and his men hot on their heels.

Ananus' control of the outer courts; his blockade of the Zealots

(204) Dismayed by the loss of the outer courts [*c*], the Zealots took refuge in the inner courts and instantly barred the gates [*d*]. (205) Ananus could not bring himself to attack the imposing and sacred gates, especially since the enemy were tossing missiles from above. He considered it unlawful, even if his attack succeeded, to let in these crowds without previous purification [*a*]. (206) Instead, he selected by lot, out of the total number, six thousand armed men whom he stationed to guard the porticoes [*b*]. (207) These were to be relieved by others, and each man had to take his turn as sentry, but many persons of rank were allowed by their superior officer to hire men of humbler means to replace them on guard duty.

13. Ananus and the people betrayed by John of Gischala

(208) The whole of this citizen army was afterwards destroyed, due to John, whose flight from Gischala we have already related [*a*]. He was a man of extreme cunning who was possessed with a desire for despotic power. He had long engaged in treasonable activities against the state [*b*]. (209) In the present crisis he pretended to be on the people's side and would accompany Ananus on his rounds, whether to hold consultations with the leaders by day, or visit the sentries by night, and then betraying his secrets to the Zealots. Thus every matter discussed by the people, even before it had been thoroughly considered, was communicated by him to their enemies. (210) Seeking to escape suspicion, he displayed the utmost obsequiousness to Ananus and the heads of the popular party [*c*]. But his very eagerness produced the opposite result; (211) for his extravagant flatteries brought him under greater suspicion, and his ubiquitous presence everywhere without an invitation made it appear as if he were betraying secrets. (212) For it was observed that their enemies knew all their intentions, and no one was more open to suspicion of disclosing them than John. (213) It was, however, no easy matter to get rid of one who had gained such influence by his villainy, for he was a man of distinction who had built up a large following among those who met in the Council [*d*] on matters of general welfare. It was therefore decided to make him take an oath of loyalty. (214) John promptly swore to be loyal to the citizens, to betray neither intention nor action to their enemies, and to place his power of body and

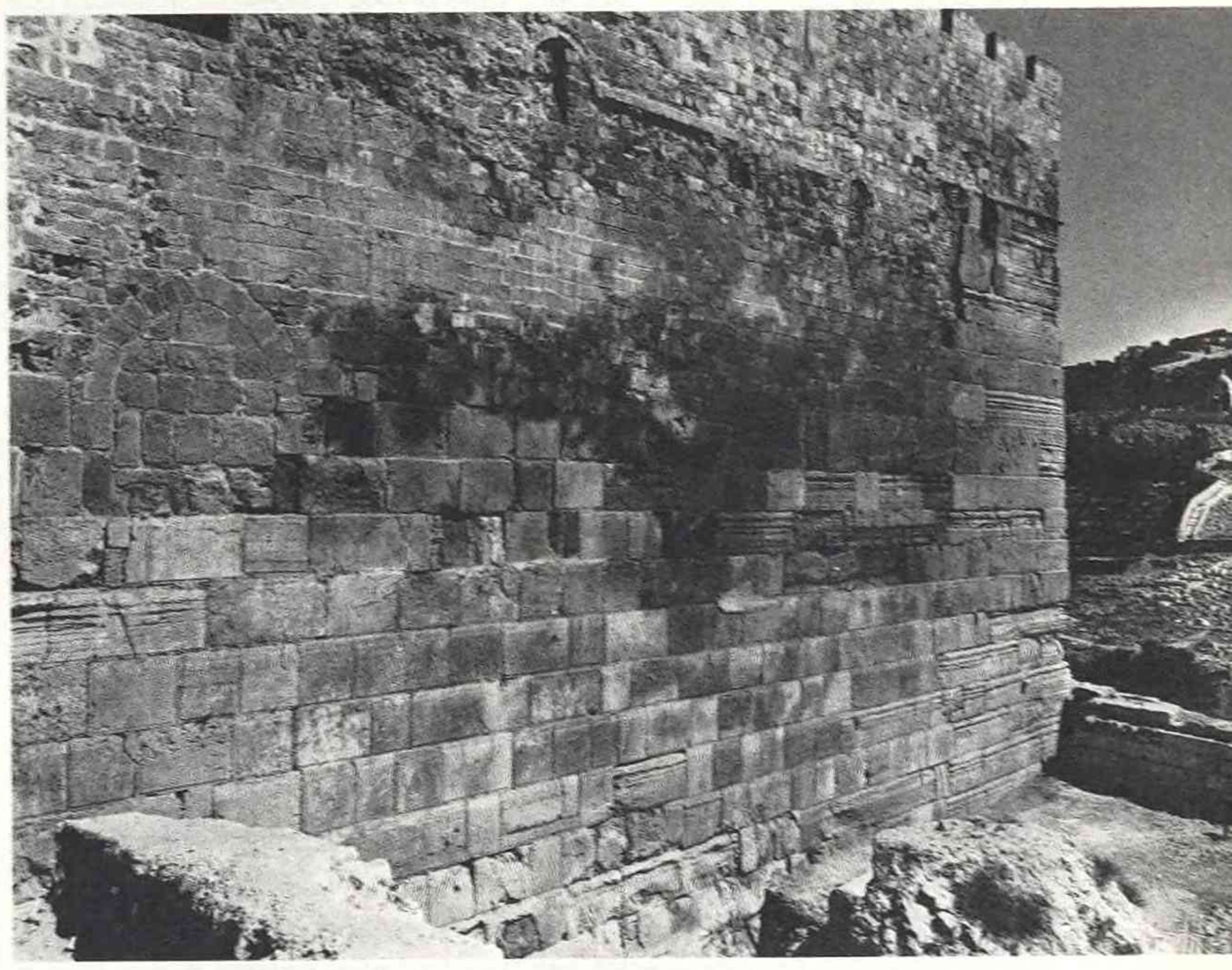
Palm plantations at Jericho

Remains of Amathus (Hamat) south of Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee

mind at their service in destroying their assailants. (215) Satisfied with these oaths, Ananus and his party now admitted him without suspicion to their deliberations, and even went so far as to commission him to arrange a truce with the Zealots; for they were anxious to preserve the Temple from pollution and to ensure that none of their countrymen should fall within its precincts [*e*].

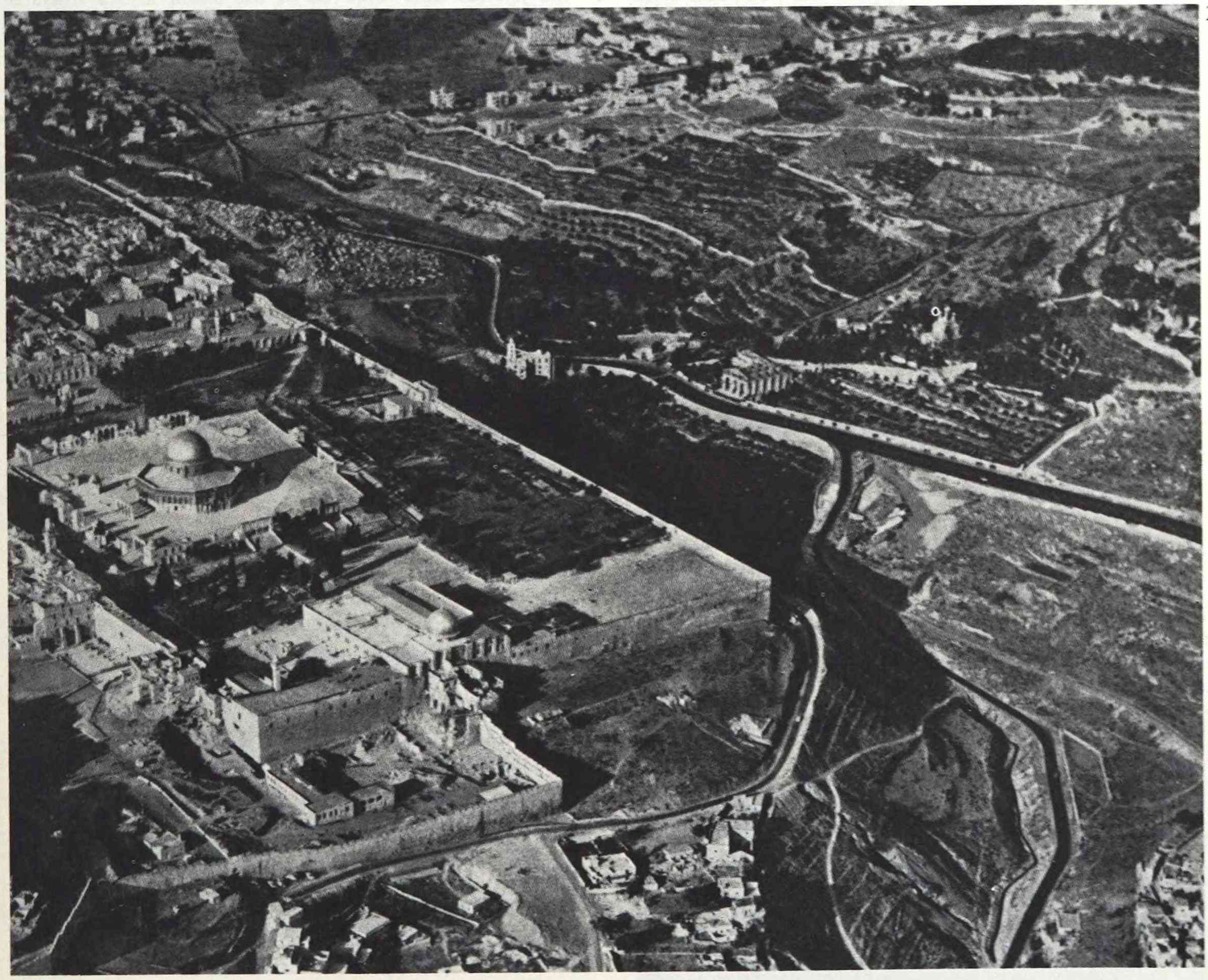
14. The Zealots incited to seek external help against Ananus

(216) John, however, acted as if he had sworn loyalty to the Zealots and not against them. He went in, placed himself in their midst, and addressed them as follows [*a*]: "I have often risked my life for your sake, to keep you fully informed of all the secret measures contrived against you by Ananus and his followers; (217) but now I am exposing myself to the greatest possible danger, in which you will all be involved,



1

The only elevated site on the Temple Mount where Ananus could post himself to address the Idumaeans who camped out and below the walls of the city could be (1) the southeast angle of the Temple (above) perched on an elevated position above the Kidron valley below or (2) the black corner patch in the center. The southeast is in fact the "pinnacle of the Temple" immortalized in Luke 4, 9; Matt. 4, 5 as the Temple enclosure from which the devil tempted Jesus to cast himself down. The hill rising on the right side is the Mt. of Olives beyond the Kidron valley and also the site of the old Jewish cemetery



2

218[*b*] *A purification service* consisted of a sacrificial sin offering. This is a specious statement, or John was deluding the Zealots. It must be remembered, moreover, that Ananus was reluctant to allow the people to enter the Temple area without previous purification (205[*a*] above). On the other hand, such a ceremonial sacrifice does not seem to accord with required practices, or to harmonize with Talmudic traditions in the matter.

223[*c*] *Law courts* The special reference to Jerusalem's specific legal institutions seems either a stylistic touch by the Greek translator of the Hebrew text, or it may suggest that the reign of terror resulted in a breakdown of law in the city.

224[*d*] *The Idumaeans* of the first century AD, who lived in the southern part of Judaea, were descendants of the people who settled in southern Judaea and mingled with the Jewish population, then converted en masse to Judaism about two centuries before the first century, and from then on constituted a part of the Jewish people. They opposed those whom they suspected of peace tendencies with Rome, mainly the aristocrats of Jerusalem.

225[*a*] Or Eleazar, son of Simeon.

225[*b*] *Zecharia, son of Amphicalleus,* or Avqilus, was a scrupulous Pharisee. His actions at the time are known to us from the Talmud (*Tosefta Shabbat* XVII, 9; *Gittin,* 56a). "He may be regarded as typifying the Pharisee Zealots, whose aim was to revolt against Rome with a view to casting off the yoke of her subjugation from the nation without giving due consideration to the actual factors of the movement" (G. Alon, *ibid.*, p. 43). Or he may be the person mentioned in Talmud *Gittin* 46 who ordered the cessation of the offering of sacrifices on behalf of the Roman emperor, which served as a signal for starting the great revolt. This expressed the views of the Pharisees who sympathized with the Zealots, and who taught that it was fundamentally forbidden to accept the Roman yoke. In any case, Zecharia headed the Zealots at the moment of the incident related above, or after. It may be observed, on the other hand, that other Pharisaic sages opted for submission to Rome because, among other things, "it seemed to evince greater ability in preserving public security." In any case, these realistic nationalists managed to survive even the fall of the state towards the end of the first century AD and after.

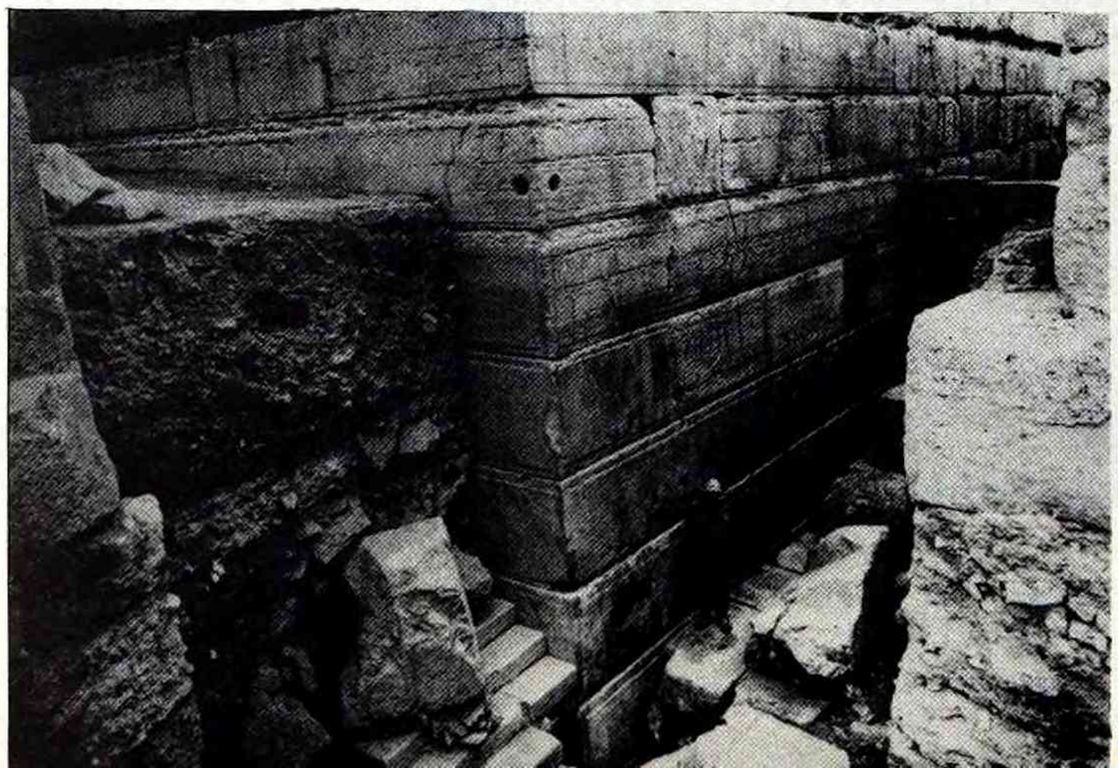
227[*c*] One may gather from the story that the Zealots were wary of John's intentions, or they feared lest their Idumaean allies would manage to overpower them, unless they had not already reached a secret understanding with John. Nevertheless, they agreed in the end considering the emergency.

238[*a*] *Jesus* Jeshua son of Gamalas (cf. 160).

239[*b*] *Barbarians* This, or other orations cited by the author, are not an authentic reproduction of the words spoken, but *only as they might have been*—or as Josephus had imagined them to be. In this respect, he was not different from Thucydides, Polybius, Livy and other famous ancient historians, whose veracity is not doubted by modern historians, who tend to question that of Josephus.

246[*a*] *Lovers of liberty*—like yourselves. Jesus' introductory remarks are too long and flowery. They are naturally the product of Josephus' creative imaginattion, but they reflect faithfully the dramatic tension throughout. Some of the venerable priest's statements were clearly not to the Idumaeans' taste, particularly at the end where they seemed to detect a hidden false note (cf. 270–282[*a*] below).

Another mute witness of the Temple Mount: foot of the immense piers that supported the large winding stairway leading to the gate of the southern Royal Portico



unless divine help comes to our aid. (218) For Ananus, impatient of delay, has persuaded the people to send a delegation to Vespasian, inviting him to come with all possible speed and take possession of the city. To injure you further, he has announced a purification service for tomorrow [*b*], so that his men can gain admittance either as worshippers or by force of arms, and attack you at close quarters. (219) Nor do I see how you can sustain the present siege for long or stand up to such a host of opponents." He added that it was by divine providence that he had been deputed to negotiate the truce, as Ananus was offering them terms only to fall upon them when they were off their guard. (220) "Therefore," he continued, "you must, if you value your lives, either sue for mercy from your besiegers, or obtain some help from outside. (221) But any who cherish hopes of being pardoned if they are defeated must have forgotten their own daring deeds, or imagine that when the offender expressed regret their victims were obliged to forgive them instantly. (222) On the contrary, even the repentance of wrongdoers is often detested, and power embitters those who are wronged even more in their anger. (223) Lying in wait to retaliate against you are the friends and relatives of the slain, and a mass of people infuriated by your dissolution of their laws and law-courts [*c*]. Even if a small number were moved to compassion, you would be crushed by the enraged majority."

Chapter IV

1. The Zealots' request to the Idumaeans for aid

(224) Such was the fanciful story he embroidered to create panic. Precisely what outside help he had in mind he did not venture to explain, but he was hinting at the Idumaeans [*d*]. However, in order to incense the personal feelings of the Zealots' leaders as well, he accused Ananus of brutality, asserting that their threats were meant particularly for them. (225) These leaders were Eleazar, son of Gion [*a*], who seemed to be the most capable of devising suitable measures and of carrying them out, and one Zecharia [*b*], son of Amphicalleus, both members of priestly families. (226) When these two heard the personal threats against them, besides the general menaces, and when, moreover, they were told that Ananus and his friends were calling in the Romans in order to secure supreme power for themselves—another of John's lies—they were at a loss what to do, as they were so desperately pressed for time, since the people were prepared to attack them quite soon. (227) The suddenness of the design cut short their chances of aid from outside, since all would be over before any of their allies could hear of their situation [*c*]; (228) nevertheless they decided to call in the Idumaeans, and they wrote a brief letter claiming that Ananus had deceived the people and was proposing to betray the capital to the Romans; that they themselves had revolted in defence

of their freedom and as a result were blockaded in the Temple; (229) that it was a matter of a few hours before their fate was decided; and that unless the Idumaeans sent immediate relief, they would soon be in the hands of Ananus and their enemies; and the city would be in the hands of the Romans. The messengers were instructed to communicate orally further details to the Idumaean chief. (230) To convey the message they selected two active men, fluent and convincing speakers on public affairs and—what was still more important—exceptionally swift in motion. (231) For the Zealots knew that the Idumaeans would comply promptly, since they were an excitable and undisciplined people, ever on the look-out for trouble, and with an appetite for revolution, ready, after a little flattery from those who sought their aid, to take up arms and rush into battle as if to a feast. (232) Speed was essential to this mission; this the messengers (both called Ananias) were eager to provide and they were soon in contact with the Idumaean chiefs.

2. The Idumaeans' mustering of their forces to help the extremists in Jerusalem

(233) The Idumaean leaders, amazed by the letter and the explanations of their visitors, raced about the country like madmen, announcing the campaign. (234) The muster of the clans outstripped the orders, and every man seized his arms to defend the freedom of the capital. (235) No fewer than twenty thousand joined the ranks and marched to Jerusalem under the command of four generals, John and James, sons of Sosas, Simon, son of Thaceas, and Phineas, son of Clusoth.

3. (236) Though neither Ananus nor the sentries had noticed the departure of the messengers, they could not fail to perceive the arrival of the Idumaeans. Forewarned of this, Ananus shut the city gates against them, then posted guards upon the walls. (237) Unwilling, however, to antagonize them completely, he decided to try persuasion before taking recourse to arms.

The Idumaeans addressed by the high priest from the ramparts

(238) So taking his stand on the tower facing them, Jesus [*a*], the chief priest, next in seniority to Ananus, addressed them as follows:

(239) "Many disorders have gripped this city, but no decree of fortune has astonished me so much as the way the wicked have received support from unexpected quarters. You, for instance, have come here to help these dregs of humanity against us with more alacrity than could be expected even if the capital had called on you to resist an invasion of barbarians [*b*]. (240) If I saw any resemblance between you and those who have invited you here, your enthusiasm would seem natural enough; no bond is as close as congenialty of character. But actually, if these friends of yours were examined one by one, each of them would be found worthy of a thousand deaths. (241) These dregs and the scum of the whole country have squandered their own property and practised their lunacy first upon the towns and villages around, and finally have poured in a stealthy stream into the holy city; these brigands are so utterly impious that they have desecrated even holy ground. (242) They may be seen now, shamelessly getting drunk in the sanctuary and spending what they have stolen from their victims to satisfy their insatiable appetite. (243) But your great army in its shining array is a sight that would be welcomed if the capital had in the common council invited you to its support against a foreign enemy. What could anybody call this but one of fortune's meanest tricks, when one sees an entire nation take up arms for the sake of a gang of despicable scoundrels? (244) For a long time I have been asking myself what made you move so suddenly. Without good reason you would never have armed yourselves from head to foot to support brigands against a related people. (245) But now that we heard Rome and treachery mentioned—that is what some of you were shouting a little while ago, and how you have come here to safeguard the freedom of the metropolis—no audacity of these scoundrels surprised us as much as this lying invention. (246) Men who are born lovers of liberty [*a*], and therefore ready above all to fight a foreign enemy, could be incited against us in no other way than by framing a charge that we were betraying liberty [*a*]. (247) But you should think who are the slanderers and who are their victims, and gather the truth not from fairy tales but from the course of events. (248) What folly could induce us to sell ourselves to the Romans now of all times? We need not have revolted at the start. Or, after we had done so, we could quickly have submitted before our countryside was devastated. (249) Now, even if we wanted to, we could not easily obtain a reconciliation, when the Romans look down on us for the loss of Galilee, and it would be a disgrace worse than death to pay court to them when they are on our doorsteps. (250) For myself, I would prefer peace to death, but once war has begun and battle has been joined, I would rather die bravely than live as a prisoner. (251) Do they declare, however, that we, the citizens' leaders, contacted the Romans secretly, or that the citizens gave us the authority to proceed? (252) If they accuse us, let them name the friends we sent, the hirelings who served us in betrayal. Was anyone spotted on his way there or caught on the way back? (253) Are they in possession of any letters? How did we keep it dark from so many citizens with whom we associate all day long, while this mere handful of men, blockaded and unable even to get down from the Temple to the city, were informed of secret goings-on in the country? (254) Has the information reached them only now, when they must pay the penalty for their misdeeds? Instead, while they had no fear for themselves, was none of us suspected of treachery? (255) If, on other hand, they laid blame on

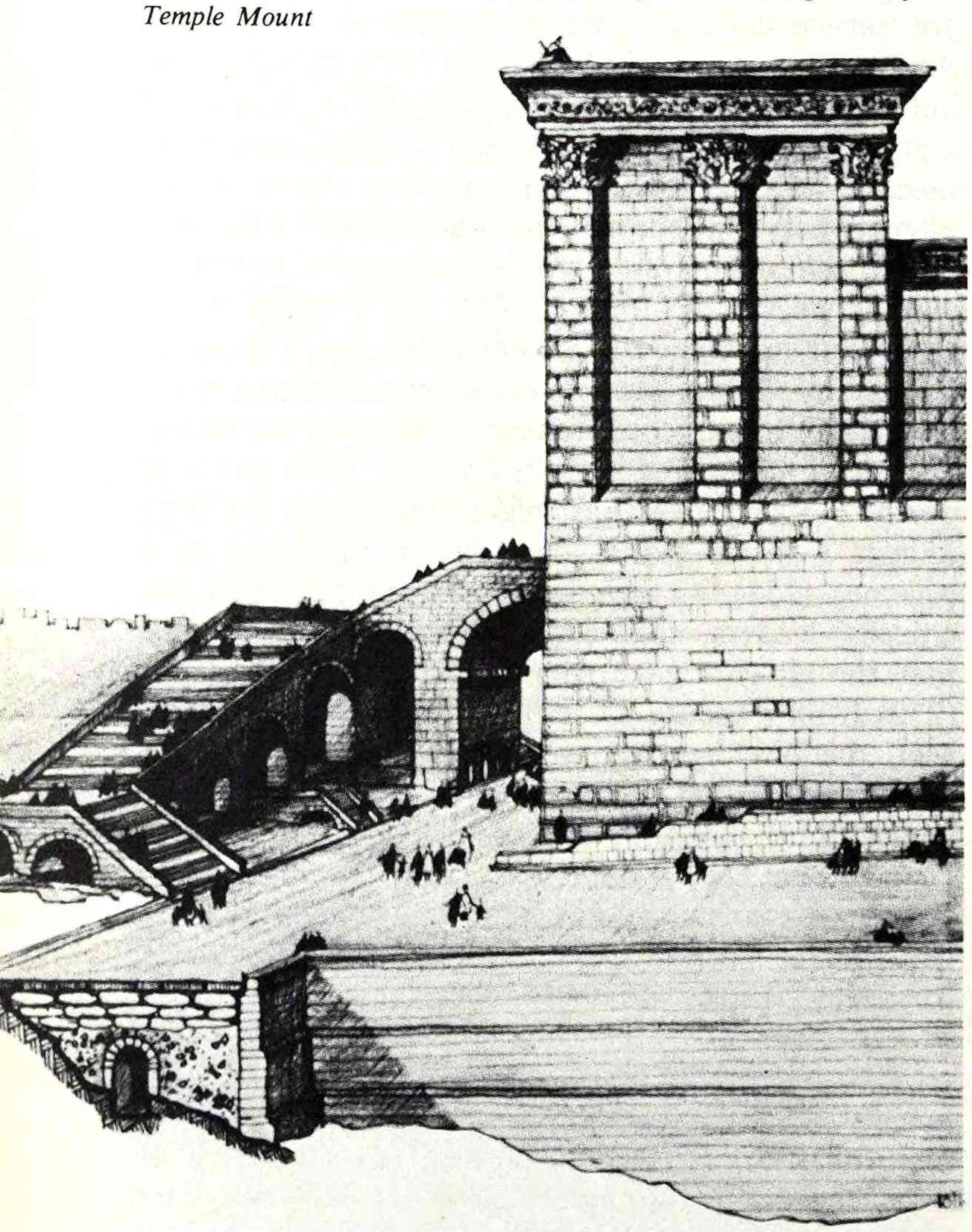
262[*a*] *Honored by foreigners: Sacrifices offered by gentiles* In addition to the Jewish pilgrims from the Diaspora, there is considerable evidence about pilgrimages made by gentile worshipers from outside Palestine, coming to worship God and bringing their sacrifices. One of the decisions of the Halakhah rules that "if a gentile sent his whole-offering from a region beyond the sea and sent the drink-offerings also, these are offered; but if he did not, they are to be offered at the charge of the congregation" (*Mishna Shekalim* 7, 6) since the foreigner was not aware that a burnt-offering had to be accompanied by libations. Tradition and practice rendered gentile sacrifices acceptable; often, particularly on feast-days, gentiles could be seen in the outer Temple precincts. They came to prostrate themselves before God, to hear the Torah, and to bring their offerings (see Ps. 24, 3). *Antiquities* III, 318 speaks of foreigners from beyond the Euphrates who made a four months' journey in order to offer their sacrifices to God in Jerusalem. We read in *John* 12, 20, about proselytes having come from abroad on the occasion of the festal pilgrimages.

271[*b*] Simon, son of Caathas (possibly Tacheas or Tachla as in *Mishna Sota* 9, 9) who won special distinction in the field (*War* V, 249, VI, 148).

284[*a*] *Furious* Another reason for the Idumaeans' wrath may have been the terrific winter storm that struck them as they stood shivering and listened to the priest's eloquence on vital matters affecting the nation. But in his absorption he seems to have overlooked the misery of the massed soldiers.

286[*b*] *Rumbles* The severe storm that broke out in mid-winter of the first quarter of AD 68 was also accompanied by severe cold, typical of mountain weather. The pelting rain soaked through the men's sheepskins or camel-hair coats, adding serious discomfort to the ugly temper engendered by Jesus' oration from the ramparts. This is a striking image, worthy of the author's pen.

Reconstruction model of the winding stairway, its pier and the pavement along and around the southern corner of the retaining wall of the Temple Mount



the citizens, everything was presumably discussed in public and there was a full attendance at the meeting, so that before your informants arrived, rumor would have brought you the news sooner and more comprehensively than your informer. (256) Then again, would they not have sent ambassadors after voting to capitulate? Who was elected? Let them speak out. (257) No, this is simply the pretense of men afraid to die; they are fighting to escape the punishment that is coming to them. Why, if the city had been destined to be betrayed, no one but our slanderous accusers would have been base enough to do it; the list of their villainies is complete already but for this one—treason.

(258) "But now that you have agreed to come here fully armed, your first duty is to defend the capital and help us wipe out the tyrants who have suppressed our courts of justice, trampled on our laws, and settled all disputes with their swords. (259) They have dragged innocent men of mark from the very market-place, chained them and, deaf to their protests and entreaties, have murdered them. (260) You are free to enter—though not by right of war—and see for yourselves the proof of what I say: houses emptied by their rapacious hands, wives and children of the murdered men clothed in black, tears and laments in every corner of the city. There is no one who has not experienced the attacks of these scoundrels. (261) Into such a frenzy of madness have they plunged that they have transferred their impudent banditry not only from the country and outlying towns to the very heart and capital of the whole nation, but even from the city to the Temple! (262) This they have now made their base and refuge, the magazine for their armaments against us; and the spot venerated by the whole world and honored by foreigners [*a*] from the ends of the earth, is trampled upon by beasts bred in our midst. (263) Now in their despair they are deliberately setting district against district, town against town, and enlisting the nation to destroy its own vitals. (264) On the contrary, the right and proper course for you, as I said before, is to help us pull up by the root the ruffians, and to punish them for deceiving you by daring to call you in as allies when they ought to have feared you as avengers.

(265) "If, however, you respect the appeals of such men, it is certainly possible for you to lay aside your arms, come into the city by right of kinship, and by holding the balance between both sides, serve as arbitrators. (266) Consider, too, what they will gain by your judgment for very serious crimes committed in broad daylight, while they themselves would not suffer men charged with no offense at all to speak in their defense. Still, let them reap the benefit of your coming. (267) But if you will neither share our indignation nor act as umpires, there is a third course—to leave both sides alone and neither trample upon us in our calamities, nor give any support to those who conspire against the metropolis. (268) However much you

suspect that some of us have been in contact with the Romans, all you have to do is to watch the approaches; if any of these slanderous suggestions is found to be true, then you can come in and defend the metropolis and punish those whose guilt is proved. You cannot be caught by the enemy off your guard while you are camping so close to the city. (269) If, however, none of those proposals seems to you acceptable or reasonable, do not be surprised that the gates remain shut against you so long as you carry arms."

4. Abusive reply of the Idumaean chief

(270) Such were Jesus' statements. The Idumaean troops paid no heed to them, they were furious at not being instantly admitted, while their generals were indignant at the suggestion of laying down their arms; they considered it to be a sign of surrender under order. (271) Thereupon Simon, son of Caathas [*b*], one of the generals, managed at last to subdue the uproar of his men. He took his stand where the chief priests could hear him, and made his reply.

(272) "I can no longer wonder that the champions of liberty are confined in the Temple, when our people are shut out of the city that belongs to all Jews—(273) shut out by men who are ready to admit the Romans—perhaps with garlands on the gates—but parley with Idumaeans from the towers, and order them to throw away the arms they have taken up in defense of liberty; (274) who will not trust these kinsmen with the defense of the capital, yet expect them to arbitrate in their disagreements, and accuse people of putting others to death without trial when they themselves are condemning the whole nation to dishonor. (275) The gates of this city have always been wide open to every foreigner for worship, and now you have barricaded them against your own people. (276) Why is that? Because, no doubt, we were really hurrying here presumably to slaughter and attack our own people—while we were only rushing to keep you free! (277) Similar, likely, is your complaint against your prisoners, and you have collected an equally convincing assortment of suspicions against them! (278) Then, while keeping in custody everyone in Jerusalem who cares about the welfare of the state, after shutting your gates without distinction against people who are nearest to you in blood and ordering them about in this insulting way, you still claim to be governed by tyrants while you accuse of despotism the victims of your own tyranny! (279) Who can tolerate such ridiculous language, when he sees your words contradicted by the facts—unless perhaps it is the Idumaeans who are excluding you from the metropolis instead of you who are excluding them from the performance of their ancestral rites? (280) One might fairly blame the men besieged in the Temple because, when they were brave enough to punish the traitors whom you, being equally guilty, describe as men of mark charged with no offence, they did not start with you and cut off first of all the most vital members of this treasonable conspiracy. (281) But if they were more tolerant than they should have been, we Idumaeans will defend the House of God and fight for our common country; we will firmly resist both her foes, the enemy from without and the traitors within. (282) We shall remain under arms here before these walls till the Romans tire of paying any attention to you, or until you come over to the cause of liberty."

5. The Idumaeans' encampment before Jerusalem in a violent storm

(283) This speech being vociferously applauded by the Idumaeans, Jesus withdrew in despair, finding them disinclined to moderation and the city exposed to war from two quarters. (284) Nor indeed were the Idumaeans feeling calmly disposed. They were furious [*a*] and offended at being excluded from the city, and at the failure of the Zealots, whom they thought to be in a strong position, to give them any assistance. They were greatly perplexed, and many regretted having come. (285) But the disgrace of going home, not having accomplished anything whatever, so far outweighed their regrets that they stayed where they were, encamped before the walls in the greatest discomfort. (286) For during the night a devastating storm broke out; a hurricane raged, rain fell in torrents, lightning flashed continuously, accompanied by fearful thunderbolts, and the earth quaked with extraordinary rumbles [*b*]. (287) Such a collapse of the very framework of things plainly foreshadowed disaster to mankind, and it seemed likely that the omens portended a great calamity.

6. Atrocities in the city

(288) In this both the Idumaeans and the people of the city were of the same mind. The former felt that God was angry at their expedition and that they would not escape punishment for bearing arms against the metropolis; while Ananus and his party believed that they had won the day without a battle and that God was steering it on their behalf. (289) But they proved to be mistaken in their conjectures about the future, and they were really predicting for their enemies the fate that awaited their friends. (290) For the Idumaeans, huddling close together, kept each other warm, and by improvising a roof with their shields above their heads, they were little the worse for the downpour; (291) while the Zealots, more anxious about the danger to their allies than their own, met to discuss whether there were any possibilities to help them. (292) The more zealous advocated using their weapons to force a way through the line of guards and then plunged boldly into the heart of the city and defiantly opened the gates to their allies. (293) The guards, confused by their unexpected move, fell back, especially as most of them were unarmed and never had been in action, while the citizens could not easily

298[*a*] *Decreed* Josephus reechoes this fatalistic note like a dirge (paras. 310 and 323) which characterizes his mood throughout.

300[*b*] This was a small party of Zealots, as will appear from the sequel.

300[*c*] It is not known which gate is meant; it may be observed that those nearer the Temple itself communicated directly with its courts through passageways, and could therefore be more easily watched by the guards.

304[*d*] *The "ascents"* to the Temple esplanade were ascending covered ramps which led from the outer streets to the Temple's outer courts, and they could be seen by guards posted in the Upper City, which overlooked the area.

310[*e*] The description bares the fierce disasters of the civil war in all its horror. The howling of the storm seems to echo the destructive hurricane at Jotapata (*War* III, 247 ff.: i.e. the din of the battle heightened by the echo from the Galilean hills) and VI, 272 ff., describing echoes of the later stage of the siege of Jerusalem.

310[*f*] Josephus, a past master in describing the atrocities of war, spares his readership no detail of the action—even at the risk of confusing them at times—mainly to bring home the malediction that had befallen Jerusalem and caused its downfall. He was not much different in this respect from many of the moderate rabbis (as we learn from the Talmud) who retained the memory of Zealot violence rather than their patriotism. They denounced them as "brigands" *(biryonim)* who strove by violence

In the course of the war, the blacksmiths and artisans were busy forging arms (Roman relief)

be mustered, for they were confined by the storm to their homes. (294) Even if this meant danger, it was their duty to put up with anything rather than leave such a vast army to perish miserably because of them. (295) The wiser people, however, opposed the use of force, seeing not only that the guards surrounding them were at full strength, but that the city wall was being carefully watched on account of the Idumaeans. (296) They assumed, also, that Ananus was everywhere, visiting the sentries at all hours. (297) Such indeed had been the case on other nights, but on this night it was omitted, not through neglect on his part, (298) but because destiny had decreed [*a*] that he should perish and all his guards with him. It was Fate [*a*] who, as the night advanced and the storm reached its height, lulled to sleep the sentries posted at the porticoes, and gave the Zealots the idea of taking some of the Temple saws and cutting the lintels of the gates. (299) The noise was not heard, owing to the roar of the wind and the continuous peals of thunder.

7. The Zealots' sally to open the gates to the Idumaeans

(300) The Zealots stole unperceived out of the Temple [*b*] and reached the wall; then, plying the saws once more, they opened the gate nearest to the Idumaeans' camp [*c*]. (301) The latter panicked at first, thinking that Ananus' men were attacking them. Every man grasped his sword to defend himself, but they soon recognized their visitors and passed through the gateway into the city. (302) Had they flung themselves upon the city in all directions—such was their frenzy—nothing could have saved the inhabitants from wholesale destruction. But they hastened first to liberate the Zealots from their confinement, at the earnest plea of the men who had let them in. "Do not," they implored, "leave those for whose sake you have come in dire peril, nor expose us to greater danger. (303) After overwhelming the guards you can easily attack the city; but if you once rouse the city, you will never overcome the guards; (304) for as soon as the citizens realize the situation, they will fall into line and block every ascent leading to the Temple" [*d*].

Chapter V

1. Wholesale slaughter of Ananus' guards

(305) The Idumaeans agreed and passed through the city and up to the Temple. When they appeared inside, the Zealots, who were anxiously awaiting their arrival, emerged boldly from the inner courts, and, mingling with the Idumaeans, fell upon the guards. (306) They slew some of the outlying sentries in their sleep, till the shouts of those who were awake aroused the whole force. In consternation they snatched their weapons and rallied to the defense. (307) As long as they thought that only the Zealots were attacking them,

they fought confidently, hoping to overcome them by weight of numbers; but when they saw others streaming in from outside they grasped the fact of the Idumaean breakthrough. (308) Thereupon, most of them lost courage, flung away their weapons, and gave themselves up to lamentation. A few of the younger men, however, setting up a defense, gallantly met the Idumaeans, and for a time sheltered the feebler people. (309) Their cries informed the people in the city of their distress, but no one ventured to come to their assistance when they learned that the Idumaeans had broken through. Indeed they responded with futile shrieks and lamentations, and a vast wailing went up from the women whose dear ones among the guards were in mortal danger. (310) The Zealots echoed the war cry of the Idumaeans, and the clamor from every side was made more terrifying by the howling of the tempest [*e*]. The Idumaeans spared none [*f*]. By nature very savage and murderous, they had been buffeted about by the storm, and they vented their rage on those who had shut them out. (311) They made no distinction between suppliants and those who fought; and many who reminded them of the ties of blood and begged them to hold in respect their common Temple, were run through with their swords. (312) There was no room for flight, no more hope of escape. They were crushed together and cut down, and most of them, driven back, with no way of retreat left, and their murderers closing in upon them, flung themselves headlong into the city, in their helplessness, choosing for themselves a fate more pitiable, in my opinion, than the one they were fleeing from. (313) The whole outer courts of the Temple were deluged with blood, and when dawn arrived it found eight thousand five hundred people dead [*f*].

2. Ananus and Jesus murdered by the Idumaeans

(314) Their fury still unsatiated, the Idumaeans now turned to the city, plundering every house and killing anyone they met. (315) Then, thinking the common people were not worth wasting their energy on, they rushed after the chief priests; it was for them that the main rush was made and they were soon captured and slain. (316) Then, standing over their dead bodies, they ridiculed Ananus for his devotion to the people and Jesus for the address which he had delivered from the wall [*a*]. (317) So impious were they that they threw out the corpses without burial, though the Jews have so much regard for funeral rites that even malefactors who have been found guilty and crucified are taken down and buried before sunset [*b*]. (318) I should not be wrong if I were to say that the fall of the metropolis began with Ananus' death, and that the overthrow of the walls and the destruction of the Jewish state dated from the day when the Jews beheld their high priest and the champion of their cause assassinated in the heart of Jerusalem [*c*].

to set up an independent Jewish state against Rome. It may not be accidental that the Zealots found their strongest, though rapidly shifting, allies in the Idumaeans, who had become, with the Galilean revolutionaries, the radical protagonists of the political principle in Palestine. But it is more difficult to explain the special ferocity of the Idumaeans in massacring the Jerusalem population indiscriminately. Perhaps they harbored some special grudge against it and against its chief priests. The sources are silent on the subject. G. H. Stevenson and A. Momigliano believe that the Idumaeans "were certainly inspired not so much by hatred of Rome as by loathing of the Jewish upper classes, whom they thought responsible for their oppression" (CAH. Vol. X, p. 860). The acute agrarian crisis in Galilee and elsewhere in the country (cited earlier in *War* II, 118, 433) lay at the roots of the revolutionary movement. The Jews of Idumaea, of whom many were landless serfs eking out a meager livelihood, may have been equally affected by the exactions of the rich landlords whose power base was the government of Jerusalem, the seat of wealth. The high priest Ananus may possibly have been regarded by the land-hungry Idumaeans as the figurehead of this landed aristocracy (cf. 323[*d*]).

313[*f*] The guards on duty at the outset of the blockade of the Zealots (within the inner courts) numbered about 6,000 and their numbers were afterwards increased to "full strength" (cf. 295).

316[*a*] Cf. 239[*b*].

317[*b*] As ordained in Deut. 21, 22; see John 19, 31.

See Roman relief on the opposite page

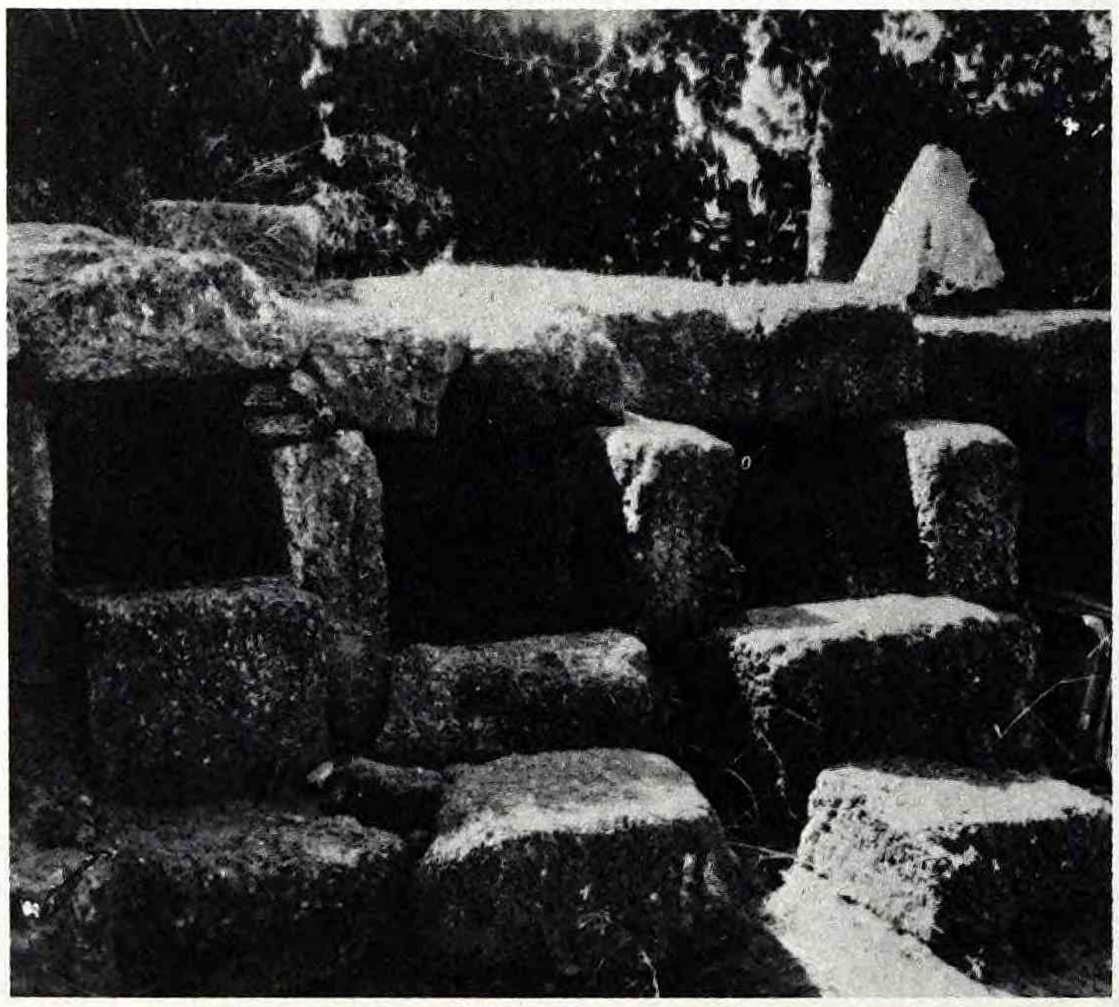
319[*c*] *Ananus* This last atrocity, which surpasses any sacrilege, is the climax of the revolution: the chief priests who led the people became the first and major victims of unchained violence. John of Gischala could not—and perhaps did not wish to save Ananus, his backer and friend of past days, from the Idumaeans whose excesses had reached apostasy. In fact, the Idumaeans had carried out his secret wish for him, and it may be remarked at this juncture that the author attributes the murder of the chief priests to the Idumaeans alone (cf. *War* VII, 267).

323[*d*] *The encomium for Ananus* One can recognize at this point an inner contradiction in Josephus' own stance. In former references and in *Antiq.* he qualifies him as cruel and bloodthirsty, but in *Life,* 196 he portrays him as the moderate leader of the temporary government in Jerusalem which had decided to expel Josephus (then a commander) from Galilee, after being bribed by his enemies. And now the time had come to describe, in a different perspective, the fate of the leader of the people's government and its heroic defender. And indeed, Ananus (Hanan ben Hanan) was one of the most praiseworthy personalities of the period, while any questionable traits in his makeup cannot mar his greatness. His loss left the people of Jerusalem without a leader and at the mercy of the Zealots who had invaded and overrun the capital. The murder of the chief priests who were even more beloved by the people than Haniah (Hanania *War* II, 441) who was killed by Menahem the Zealot leader at the early stage of the rebellion, deeply impressed Josephus as an omen of doom. *I suppose* at this point, he comes close to the stance of the wrathful prophets of yore who condemned the sinful people and their city, except that the people had not sinned as much as the extremists.

324[*e*] The "world-wide" significance of the Temple ritual is based on the sacred tradition of the Tabernacle of Moses (cf. *Antiq.* III, 123, 180 ff.). The Temple is represented as a symbol of the universe. While the march of time has helped to shed the mythological significance, the universality of monotheism, which grew there, has anchored Jerusalem forever in people's hearts.

327[*a*] Cf. 333[*b*]. *The nobles,* or the distinguished persons of Jerusalem, remembered in Jewish sources as "yaqirey Yerushalayim"; the term which covers the aristocracy, the rabbis, and many honorable men.

Family burial niches in Jerusalem



Eulogy for Ananus and Jesus

(319) Ananus was a man revered at every hand and a person of the highest integrity [*c*]. Although so distinguished by birth, position, and the honors he had attained, it was his wont to treat even the humblest as equals. (320) Utterly devoted to liberty and inspired by a passion for democracy, he always put his private interests second to the public welfare. The maintenance of peace was his supreme aim, for he knew that Rome was invincible. But when he had no option he made careful preparations for war, so that, if the Jews could not come to terms, they might carry on the war skillfully. (321) In short, had Ananus lived, the people would either have come to terms with the Romans, for he was an eloquent speaker whose words carried weight, and he had already silenced his opponents, or else, if hostilities continued, the Jews would have greatly retarded the victory of the Romans under such a commander. (322) His yoke fellow was Jesus who, though not on his level, stood far above the rest. (323) But I suppose God had condemned the polluted city [*d*] to destruction and meant to purge the sanctuary by fire and so he cut off those who clung to them and loved them so dearly. (324) Thus, men who a little while before had been clad in sacred vestments and had conducted the worship of world-wide [*e*] renown, revered by visitors to the city from the whole world, were now thrown out naked, to be devoured by dogs and wild beasts. (325) Virtue itself wept for these men, I believe, lamenting her total defeat at the hands of vice. Yet, such was the end of Ananus and Jesus.

3. Extermination of the aristocracy by the Zealots and Idumaeans

(326) Having disposed of the chief priests, the Zealots and the Idumaean throngs fell upon the population and butchered them like a herd of unclean animals. (327) Ordinary people were killed where they were caught; the young nobles [*a*] were arrested, chained and locked up in prison. Their execution was postponed in the hope that some would come over to their own side. (328) But no one paid heed to their proposals, all preferring to die rather than join these scoundrels against their own country, despite the fearful agonies which they underwent. (329) They were flogged and racked, and only when their bodies could no longer endure these tortures were they allowed to die by the sword. (330) Those arrested by day were dispatched by night, and their bodies thrown out to make room for the next batch of prisoners. (331) The people were so petrified by fear that no one openly dared to be seen weeping or burying a deceased kinsman. They kept their tears secret behind locked doors, and they uttered their groans discreetly to avoid being heard by any of their enemies; (332) for the mourners immediately received the same treatment as the mourned. Only by night they took up a little dust in their hands and sprinkled it on the bodies,

Burial niches with ossuaries abound in the rocky ground around Jerusalem

A large rolling stone that sealed the entrance to a family tomb

Entrance to the multiple niches of family tombs entitled "Tombs of the Sanhedrin" north of Jerusalem

or by day, if some persons were exceptionally venturesome. (333) Twelve thousand of the youthful nobility [*b*] died in this way.

4. Mock trials; the murder of Zacharias

(334) Disgusted now with indiscriminate slaughter, the Zealots set up sham courts [*b*] and trials. (335) They had decided to liquidate Zacharias, son of Baris [*c*], one of the most distinguished citizens. He had exasperated them by his hatred of wrong and his love of freedom; and as he was a man of considerable wealth, they hoped not only to plunder his property but also to get rid of a dangerous and powerful opponent. (336) They therefore issued a proclamation, summoning seventy of the leading citizens to the Temple, where they turned them into a stage jury, as in a play, without the authority of judges. Then they charged Zacharias with trying to betray their country to Rome and of holding treasonable communications with Vespasian. (337) They brought no evidence or proof of the charges, but declared that they themselves were quite convinced of his guilt and claimed that this established the true facts. (338) Zacharias realized that no hope of escape was left, as he had been treacherously summoned to a prison and not a court of law. But certain death was not going to deprive him of free speech. He rose and scoffed at the incredibility of their charges, and in a few words disposed of the whole indictment. (339) Then, turning upon his accusers, he methodically detailed all their illegalities and bitterly lamented the scandalous state of public affairs. (340) The Zealots exploded in rage and could hardly keep their hands from their swords, but they preferred to play out to the end their part in this sham trial, and were eager also to determine whether the jurors would put considerations of justice above their own peril. (341) But the seventy brought in a unanimous verdict in favor of the defendant, preferring to die with him rather than bear the responsibility for his wrongful execution. (342) The Zealots shouted against this acquittal, and were furious with the jury for not realizing that the authority bestowed upon them was a mere pretence. (343) Two of the most villainous men then set upon Zacharias and murdered him in the middle of the Temple, jesting over his dead body. "Now you have got our verdict too, and a more certain dismissal," and at once cast his body out of the Temple courts and into the valley below. (344) Then they insolently struck the judges [*d*] with the flat of their swords and drove them from the courts. They spared their lives for one purpose only—that they might disperse through the city and let all the citizens realize the servitude to which they were reduced.

5. A Zealot's denunciation of his party to the Idumaeans; his plea to them to leave

(345) The Idumaeans now regretted that they had come and were offended by these proceedings. (346) In this mood one of the Zealots came to them private-

333[*b*] and 334[*b*] *A further look at Josephus' thesis* The Zealots' court was similar to the revolutionary courts of later history. The fundamental thesis advanced in *War,* that a minority of extremists overcame the moderate party in Judaea and carried it to rebellion, has parallels in many other rebellions, where an extremist minority succeeded in dragging along the majority, who thought as they did—albeit with less intensity. Noteworthy, however, is the small part Josephus gives to the messianic movements which accompanied the political upheaval. He argued that the people were misled by the extremist minority and, at the same time, he exalted the bravery displayed by the Jews no less than that of Vespasian and Titus. But where his own personal and political attitude, or behavior, were not in question, he remains a source of undeniable merit. It devolves upon the modern historian to allot responsibility between the protagonists in a situation where the real conflict was between minds incapable of any mutual sympathy. The Roman-Judaean conflict was one between the Jewish ideal of a state subordinate to the national religion, shaped by the glorious Davidic image, and the cosmopolitanism of imperial Rome in which religion itself was subordinate to the state.

335[*c*] *Zecharias,* son of Baruch. The Zealots set up a court of seventy, like a Sanhedrin. They would not have taken the trouble to do so had it been customary to try capital cases before a smaller number of judges; for they wished him to be put to death, and capital cases were always tried by a court of seventy only. This incident is not mentioned in the N.T.

349[*a*] *The whole population* is a gross exaggeration (see para. 354 ff.); the revolutionaries' object was to eliminate certain sections of the population and not to perpetrate a holocaust.

352[*b*] *No invasion was expected* This partisan disregard seems to ignor the obvious potential military threat to Jerusalem. It is true that between the end of AD 67 and mid-68. Vespasian had practically suspended operations, though he had four legions numbering 80,000 and auxiliaries under his command (373 ff.) and was reorganizing his forces for the siege of Jerusalem. Hence the Zealots may have misinterpreted this temporary pause as a development to their advantage. At this point the author leaves his reader at liberty to interpret this dialogue any way he chooses or, alternatively, to assume that the Zealots tried to influence the Idumaeans to leave Jerusalem because their cooperation was not required any more, and they were unwilling to let them share in the government which they intended to set up; whereupon the Idumaeans did as they were advised and left behind a certain number, as seen in *War* IV, 568.

353[*a*] Cf. 503 ff. (spelled elsewhere "Gorion" by Josephus).

358[*b*] *Gourion*—Joseph ben Gourion who, along with the priest Ananus, was given control over Jerusalem when a temporary government had been set up at the outbreak of the hostilities (*War* II,,563, IV, 159).

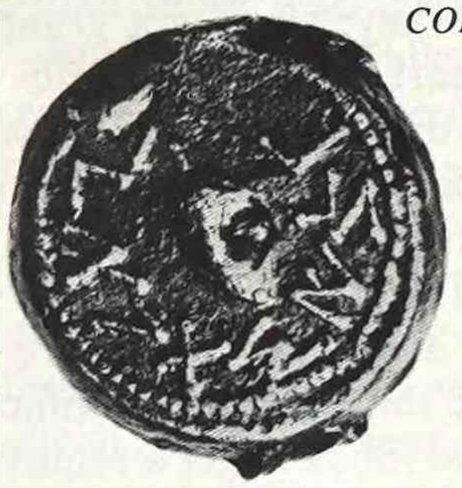
358[*c*] *Democrat,* who believed in the rule of the people.

359[*d*] *Niger,* a native of Peraea, east of the Jordan and hero of the opening battle with Cestius (*War* II, 529); at one time Jewish governor of the district of Judea (II, 566). He led unsuccessful attacks against the Roman garrison at Ascalon, when he won distinction (III, 11–28). The Zealots feared that such a charismatic person would some day take revenge for the murder of the other moderate leaders. However, the assassination of contemporary heroes reveals the degree of backsliding on the part of the Zealots whose excesses bring to mind the ruthless purges during the French and Russian Revolutions.

Note: A distinction must be made between the biblical district of *Judea* in central Palestine and *Judaea,* the name applied by the Ropmans to Palestine as a whole.

360[*a*] *Vital importance of the burial customs* The Hebrews paid careful attention to the burial of the dead, to his interment in the consecrated ground of a cemetery, to the position in which he was placed in the tomb, and to the marking of the site. Burial tombs of the period in question had attained a high degree of perfection, as evidenced by scores found throughout the country. They range from small and simple family tombs to large catacombs with scores of *loculi* (kokhim, separate cavities in a burial cave or rock-cut tomb). The richer tombs of the period usually had an open forecourt from which a corridor led into a chamber, or series of chambers, in whose walls were *loculi* dug into the

COIN ISSUE OF THE GREAT REVOLT WITH JEWISH RITUAL SYMBOLS



Quarter-Shekel *with* ethrog — *citrus fruit — and legend:* Of the Redemption of Zion

Obverse of Half-Shekel *from the first year of the Jewish War*

Shekel *with branch of pomegranate and legend:* Jerusalem the Holy

Reverse of the same coin with two lulavim — *palm branches — and legend:* 4th year *(of the Jewish War)*

Reverse of the same coin

Reverse of Shekel *with chalice and legend:* Shekel Israel
Above the chalice, the date in the form of an old Hebrew character ℸ (A) can be seen (= *1st year of the Jewish War)*

ly and held a meeting at which he denounced the excesses they had committed jointly with those who had called them in, and gave a detailed account of the situation in the capital. (347) They had mustered, he said, believing that the chief priests were betraying the metropolis to the Romans, yet they had found no evidence of treason, whereas its professed defenders dared to commit deeds of war and domination. (348) The right time, he said, for the Idumaeans to have stopped all this had been at the outset, but having once become their partners and plunged into civil war, they should now at least set a limit to their misdeeds and not go on lending support to men who were subverting ancestral laws. (349) If some of them were still vexed at the closing of the gates and the refusal to let them enter at once with their weapons, had not those who had kept them out been punished? Ananus was dead, and in a single night almost the whole population [*a*] had been wiped out. (350) Such actions, he could perceive, had produced regret in many of their people; (351) but among those who called them in he saw only unparalleled brutality, and no respect whatever for their deliverers. Before the very eyes of their allies they had dared to perpetrate the vilest atrocities, and their excesses would be laid at the Idumaeans' door if someone either prohibited or dissociated himself from all that was going on. (352) And so, since the allegation of treason had been a calumny and no invasion of the Romans was expected [*b*], while the city was governed by a despotism that could not easily be dislodged, their right course, he said, was to go back home and have nothing to do with these scoundrels, thereby making amends for all the crimes in which they had been tricked into taking a part.

Chapter VI

1. The Idumaeans' leaving of the city to the mercy of the Zealots

(353) Accepting his advice, the Idumaeans first released from prison about two thousand citizens (who at once fled from the city and joined Simon, of whom we shall speak presently [*a*]). They then left Jerusalem suddenly and went home. Their departure produced an unanticipated effect on both sides: (354) the citizens, unaware of their regret, recovered their confidence for a time, as if rid of an enemy; (355) the Zealots, on the other hand, grew more arrogant still, not as if they had been deserted by allies, but relieved of men who disapproved of, and sought to interfere, with their excesses. (356) No longer was there any hesitation or cautiousness about their crimes; they reached all their decisions swiftly and executed them quicklier still. (357) They thirsted above all for the blood of the brave and the nobly born, massacring the latter out of envy, the former from fear; for they felt that their safety depended on their leaving no person of authority alive. (358) To mention one instance among many, they murdered Gourion [*b*], a man of high rank and birth, and yet a democrat [*c*], passionately devoted to liberty, if ever a Jew was. He owed his ruin mainly to his unreserved frankness, added to the privileges of his position. (359) Nor did even Niger the Peraean [*d*] escape their hands. He had shown amazing courage in his battles with the Romans; but now, protesting vehemently and pointing to his scars, he was dragged through the middle of the city. (360) When pulled outside the gate, he despaired of life and begged them to give him burial [*a*], but they

rock. The more elaborate include the tomb of Queen Helena, known as the "Tomb of the Kings" (natives of the royal house of Adiabene in Mesopotamia who had been converted to Judaism, as illustrated), and the rock-hewn "Tombs of the Sanhedrin" north of the Old City, whose main entrance is carved by a decorated gable. This catacomb has two rows of niches cut into the walls of its chambers, one above the other, providing for some 70 burial places within one tomb (and thus the popular ascription to the Sanhedrin). Other tombs had porticoed entrances resting on two or four columns with a frieze and a gable decorated with foliage and fruit motifs. *The Nephesh:* Many tombs, such as that of the family of Herod, adjacent to the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, or the beautiful tombs of the Kidron valley, notably the tomb and monument of the "priests of the Bene-Hezer" of the Hasmonean period (as inscribed there), and tombs of other distinguished persons of Jerusalem, as well as the more recently discovered Tomb of Jason in western Jerusalem, (cf. *War* III, 414[*a*]) had a monument for the spirit of the deceased—a *nephesh*—in the form of a pyramid, columns, or another shape, adjacent to the tomb itself. Normally the outer door of the tomb would be blocked by a heavy slab of stone, but the more elaborate ones had a large rolling stone *(golal)* which moved in a narrow slot and could be opened mechanically. Burial customs in O.T. times differed from those in later centuries. In O.T. times it was enough for a man to be buried with his ancestors without any need for a separate interment of his bones. Later on, when belief spread in the individual resurrection of the dead, the bones were collected years later (the flesh being regarded as sinful—worm eaten—but the skeleton remained part of the essential personality—"his bones." They were then placed in receptacles known as *ossuaries*. This form of interment, known as "second burial" was in vogue during the last centuries BC and the first two centuries AD. Alongside the ossuaries, full-sized coffins (sarcophagi) made of various materials were also common. Along with these customs, a new burial method had developed in view of the great cost of hewing a burial cave in the hard rock of Palestine. In most of the burial caves, in addition to the normal loculi, *arcosolia* (benches with an arched roof) were dug in the walls. The body, as stated, would first be placed on these; then after some time, when new burial space was needed, the bones would be collected into an ossuary made mostly of stone, wood, clay, or metal. They did not exceed 60–65 cms. in length, and had flat, arched, or gabled covers, some plain, but mostly decorated. Many ossuaries and sarcophagi were inscribed with the names of the deceased.

371[*a*] *Spectators*, as at gladiatorial spectacles.

376[*b*] *Domestic disorders. Critical comments on Vespasian's tactics and Jewish reactions* As pointed out in 352[*b*], Vespasian practically suspended operations until the summer of AD 69 (cf. 486–490, 491–497 ff.). However, scanning it from a broad historical angle, some scholars (among them D. A. Schlatter) observe "that this cautious campaign... in which so little spectacular progress was made, had the effect of stimulating and strengthening the insurgent Jews that God was concerning Himself with the safety of Zion" (*Geschichte Israels,* p. 332). Although the Jerusalem government was considerably disturbed by the warring factions which had concentrated there for the defense, it seems that the chaos could not have reached the destructive dimensions described by Josephus, "from what we gather from his own testimony (namely), that the great festivals were still being celebrated in the Temple and attended by the people generally...That such men should continue to remain as the defenders of a city upon a relentless enemy who was steadily closing in, is not consistent with the character of mere 'brigands' and desperadoes, as Josephus would have us see them, but it clearly points to men animated, fanatically perhaps, but genuinely, with a dynamic belief that they were waging a holy war, in which they could be certain of divine help. And thus ... from the slackening of Roman efforts in 68–69 there grew the unshakable confidence in the ultimate success of their cause" (S. G. F. Brandon, The Fall of Jerusalem, p. 163–164). On the other hand, as pointed out by J. N. Simhoni (*ibid.*), the Zealots' accusation about the people of Jerusalem, being potential traitors to the national cause was not justified. Even if Ananus and his allies (as assumed) meant to conclude a separate peace, they could not persuade the people of Jerusalem, whose hatred of the Romans was a byword. Moreover, the moderate leaders feared that their political pacifism might instead push the people into the arms of the revolutionaries.

threateningly declared that they would not grant him the one desire of his heart—a grave—and then murdered him. (361) As he died, Niger called down on their heads the vengeance of Rome, famine and pestilence added to the horrors of war and, as a final disaster, internecine strife. (362) All these things God visited upon the wretches; and very justly were they doomed before long to taste through party conflict the mad fury of their comrades. (363) Niger's removal in any case lessened their fear of being overthrown, but there was no section of the people for whose destruction they did not devise some pretext. (364) Those with whom they had quarrelled formerly had been put to death; those who had not clashed with them in peacetime were subjected to suitable accusations: (365) if a man never came near them he was suspected of arrogance; if he approached them with freedom, he was accused of treating them with contempt. If he was obsequious, he was held guilty of conspiracy. The one penalty for the most serious accusations, and the most trifling, was death, and none escaped unless he were quite insignificant due to humble birth or poverty, except by accident.

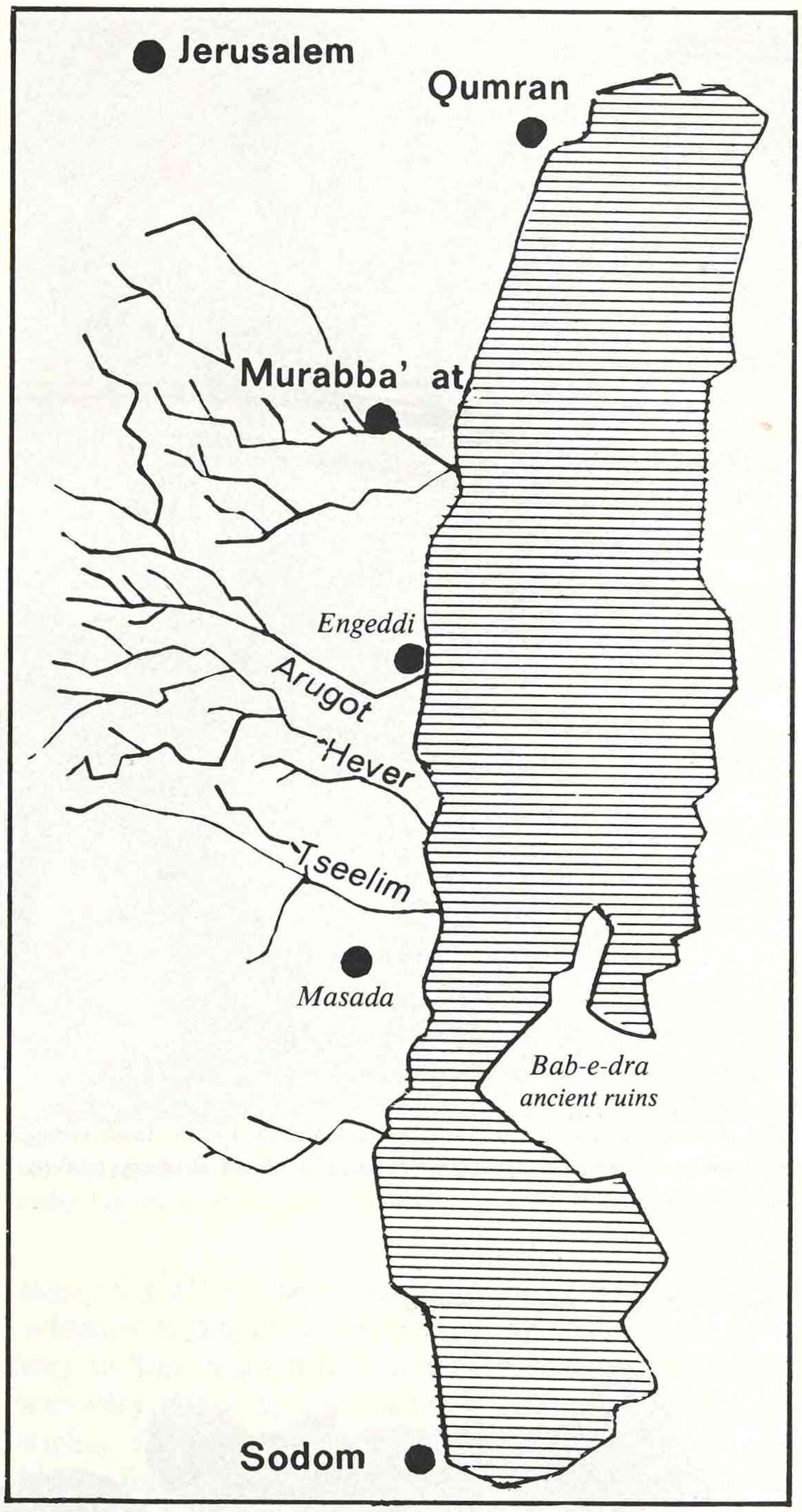
2. Vespasian's pause before attacking Jerusalem

(366) All the Roman generals regarded the dissensions within the enemy's camp as a godsend, and were eager to march against the capital. They urged Vespasian, as commander-in-chief, to follow this course. "Divine providence," they said, "has come to our aid by setting our adversaries against each other; (367) but the pendulum will rapidly swing back and the Jews will soon be reunited through weariness or regret at mutual strife." (368) Vespasian replied that they were greatly mistaken as to the appropriate policy, and were eager to make a theatrical, though hazardous, display of warriors in arms, oblivious of expediency and safety. (369) If he were immediately to attack the city, he would only reunite their opponents and turn all their forces against himself; but if he waited, he would find their numbers reduced by internal divisions. (370) God was a better general than he, and was handing over the Jews to the Romans without any exertion on their part, and bestowing victory upon them without danger to Roman strategy. (371) Consequently, while their opponents were perishing by their own hands and suffering that greatest evil, civil strife, the right thing to do was to keep their distance as spectators of the dangers [*a*], rather than contend with men who courted death and were raving against each other. (372) "But if anyone thinks," he went on, "that the glory of victory will lose its zest without a fight, let him realize that success obtained by sitting still is a sounder policy than when won by the uncertainties of war."

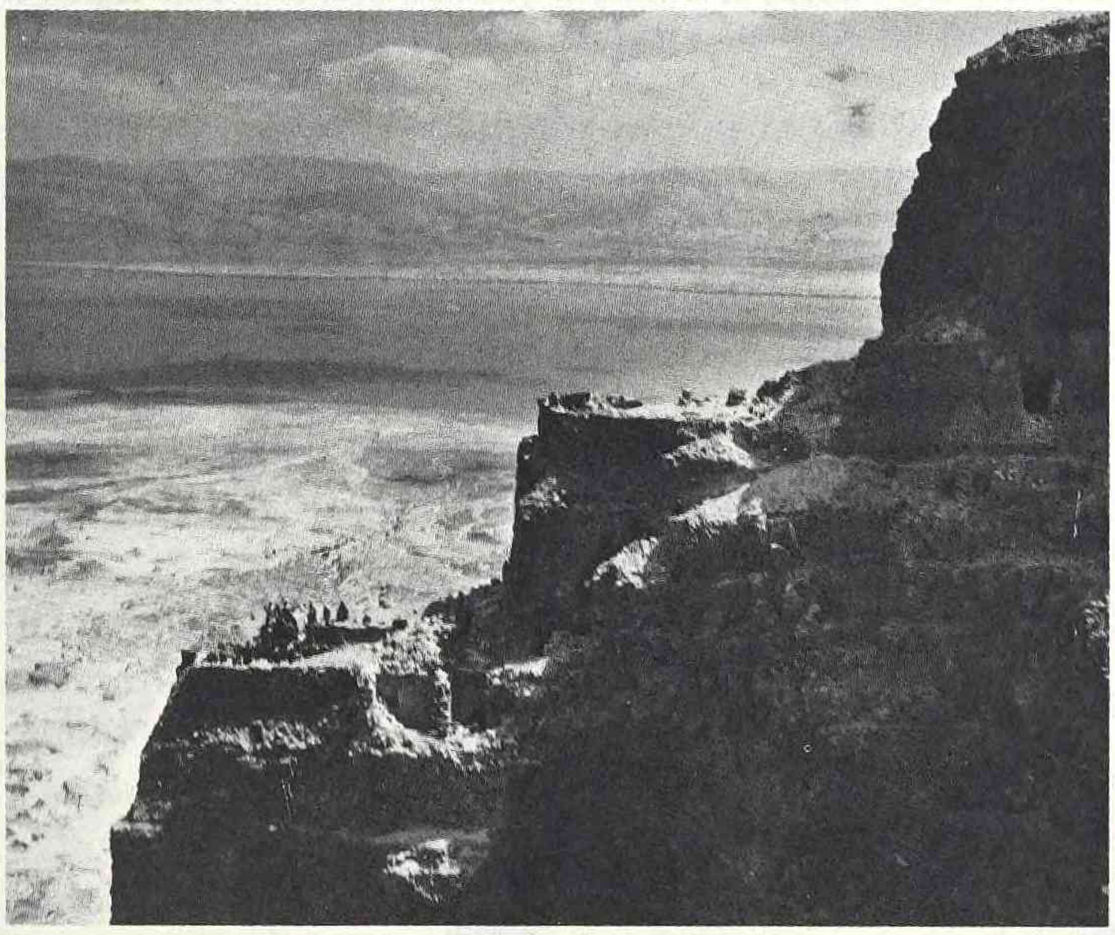
The wisdom of sitting still

(373) "Actually, those who accomplish just as much by self-discipline and brains are no less entitled to

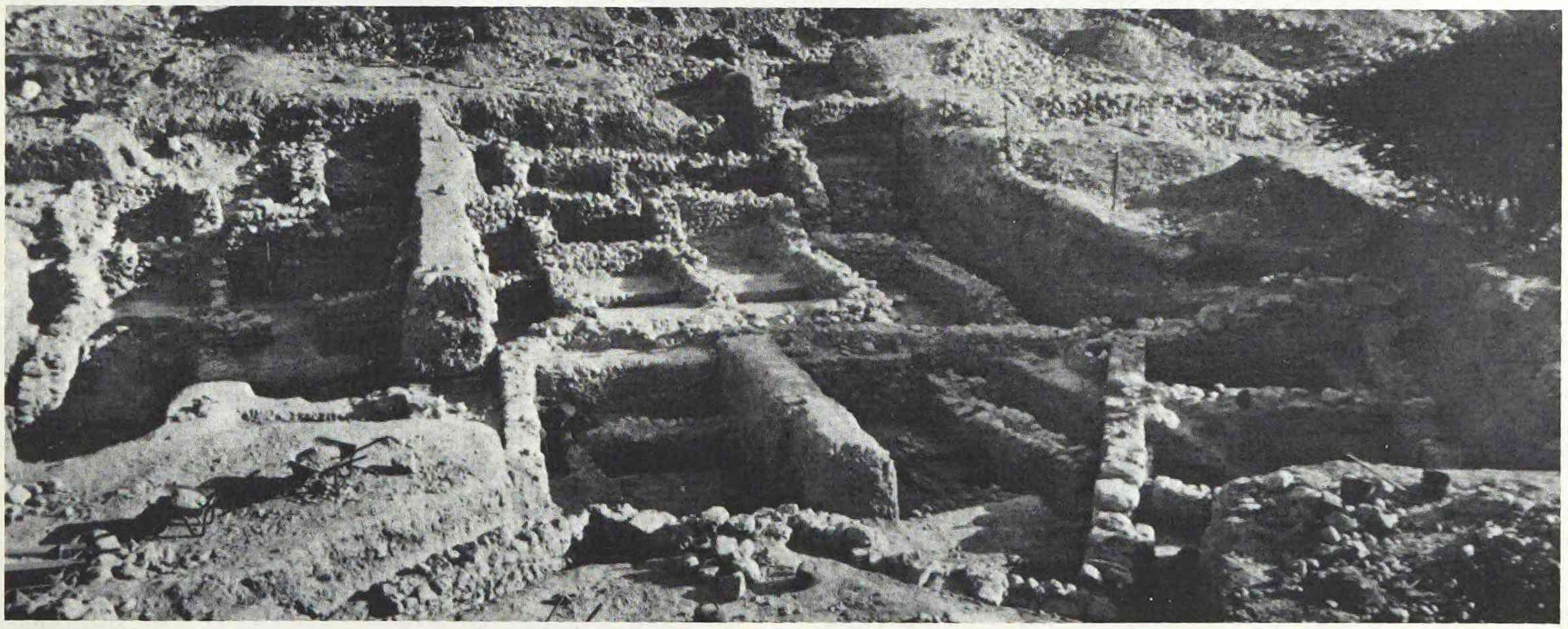
fame than those who distinguish themselves in combat." Furthermore, while the enemy was growing weaker his own army would recover its strength after its continuous toil and be stronger than ever. (374) Above all, this was not the time to set their hearts on a dazzling victory; (375) for the Jews were not busily engaged in forging weapons, erecting fortifications, or recruiting auxiliaries, in which case delay would be prejudicial, but they were risking their lives through civil war and dissension, and suffering daily greater miseries than they would themselves inflict on them if they attacked and defeated them. (376) If, then, safety was the criterion, the Jews should be left to prolong their own destruction; and if they asked what kind of success would win the most fame, they ought not attack those suffering from domestic disorders [*b*], for there would be no denying that their victory was due, not to them, but to internal sedition [*c*].



This is how Masada lay bare during nineteen centuries before the reconstruction projects featuring its glory in Herodian times



Engeddi ruins and Herodian building in the foreground



The protracted war in the Judaean countryside was a death struggle between the combined cavalry and infantry of the Romans and the Jewish rural population

376[*c*] *Internal Sedition* Jewish dissent was the source of the disaster. This slogan is the automatic and single comment and judgment that Jews have made for nineteen centuries to explain the downfall of the ancient Jewish commonwealth.

382[*a*] *Rot in the sun* Cf. *War* II, 148 and compare with the scrupulous care that the Essenes took "not to offend the rays of the deity," namely the sun.

386[*b*] *Rogues' stories* The allegations smack of exaggeration, for the Zealots were essentially religious Jews who did not scoff at their traditions. One must consider the passions which sustained them in their desperate war and the fact that, humanly speaking, their cause was hopeless, since sooner or later Rome would put forth all her mighty strength and crush their weak resistance, then take a most bloody revenge.

Evidence of the coins (AD 66–70). A burning faith lies enshrined in the symbols and words that the Jews engraved on their new coins. "In the first year, silver coins of the Jewish Revolt were struck with the legend "Sekel (shekel) of Israel" ... and "Jerusalem the Holy" on the reverse, as well as bronze coins of various small denominations. In the second year of the war (AD 67) the legend on the reverse side of the coins was changed to 'Freedom of Zion' surrounded by a vine branch with leaf and tendrils; in the fourth year, the legend became 'For the Redemption of Zion!'" (B.Mazar, *op. cit.* p. 89.) For the moment, the insurgents' policy probably consisted of no more than a determination to put down all opposition to the sacred cause of Israel's liberty, and to await the inevitable attack of the impious Romans behind the walls of the Holy City with full confidence in God's assistance. Another aspect of the overall Jewish strategy against Rome is discussed in note 545[*a*] below.

388[*c*] *Inspired men* It is not known who was the ancient authority quoted, whether one of the biblical prophets, or a quotation from an apocryphal "wisdom" source, but its truth is obvious.

389[*a*] *The rebel coalition* It appears that John of Gischala had maintained neutrality during the terrorist excesses of the Zealot coalition in Jerusalem so as to impress his stand upon his fellow citizens and cause a rift in the coalition.

395[*b*] *Sovereign* Josephus does not hide the fact that his hatred for John surpassed that which he he felt for the Zealots.

Transportation by camel in Judaea

Legionary

3. The Jews who deserted to the Romans

(377) The officers concurred with Vespasian's arguments, and the soundness of his judgment was soon made evident by the daily stream of deserters who eluded the Zealots. (378) But flight was difficult, since every outlet was guarded and anyone caught there, whatever the reason, was assumed to be on his way to the Romans, and slain at once. (379) However, if he paid enough they let him go, and only those who offered nothing were traitors, so that the rich purchased their escape and only the poor were slaughtered. (380) Dead bodies were heaped up high along all the main roads; and many who were anxious to desert changed their minds and decided instead to die within the walls, for hope of burial made death in their own city appear the lesser evil. (381) But the Zealots had reached such a pitch of barbarity as to grant interment to no one, whether killed within the city or on the roads: (382) as if they were pledged to destroy the laws of their own country and those of nature as well, and to add pollution of the Deity to their outrages against humanity, they left the dead to rot in the sun [*a*]. (383) For those who buried a relative, as for deserters, the penalty was death, and one who gave burial to another soon needed it himself. (384) In short, no other lofty emotion disappeared so completely amid the miseries of the time as pity. What should have awakened compassion were the things that provoked these wretches, whose fury shifted alternately from the living to the slain and from the dead back to the living. (385) Such terror prevailed that the survivors envied those already dead, now at rest, while the tortured occupants of the prisons declared that, compared with them, even the unburied were happy. (386) Every law of man was trampled underfoot, every dictate of religion ridiculed by their persecutors who scoffed at the oracles of the prophets as rogues' stories [*b*]. (387) Yet these prophecies clearly discerned between the laws of right and wrong, and, by transgressing these laws, the Zealots caused those prophecies against their country to be fulfilled. (388) For there was an ancient saying of inspired men [*c*] that the city would be taken and the sanctuary burnt to the ground by right of war whenever it should be visited by sedition, and Jewish hands would be the first to defile God's sacred precincts. Though the Zealots believed in this prophecy, they made themselves the means of its fulfilment.

Floor of the Jordan valley with river meandering over the scrub-covered valley bottom, called the Ghor or Zor

Chapter VII

1. The split of the Zealot party; John's assumption of dictatorial power

(389) But now John, who had set his heart on despotic power, was not content to be equal to his fellows, but gradually built around him a following of the most depraved elements, and he cut adrift from the rebel coalition [*a*]. (390) He constantly ignored the decisions of the rest, and issued his own despotic orders, evidently laying claim to sovereignty. (391) Some gave way to him through fear, others from devotion (for he was very clever at winning support through oratorical tricks). Many thought that they would be safer if the blame for their daring crimes should later be laid at one door rather than at many; (392) and his energy, both of hand and brain, won him not a few henchmen. (393) On the other hand, he was abandoned by a large number of opponents, partly prompted by envy and unwillingness to submit to a former equal, but primarily deterred by dread of monarchial rule; (394) for they could not hope to depose him easily once he was master, and thought that they could later excuse themselves if they opposed him from the start. In any case, every man chose to face war with its miseries, rather than accept voluntary servitude and die like a slave. (395) This, then, was the origin of the split in the party, and John faced his opponents like a rival sovereign [*b*]. (396) However, their attitude to each other was purely defensive, and there was little or no actual skirmishing. But their contest with each other was only at the expense of the people; they vied with each other in carrying off the most loot. (397) While the government was storm-tossed by the three greatest calamities—war, tyranny, and party strife—the

citizens felt that war was relatively the mildest. At all events, they fled from their own people and took refuge with foreigners, finding in the Roman camp the safety which they despaired of finding among their own people.

2. The Sicarii's occupation of Masada and their raids on the countryside

(398) But now a fourth calamity was threatening the doomed nation. (399) Not far from Jerusalem was a formidable fortress built by the kings in past ages as a respository for their treasures and a refuge for themselves in the hazards of war. It was called Masada [*c*]; (400) and it was in the hands of the so-called Sicarii [*d*]. Up till now, they had confined themselves to raids in the neighboring districts with the mere object of procuring supplies, fear preventing any further ravages. (401) But now when they heard that the Roman army was inactive while the Jews in Jerusalem were torn by sedition and domestic tyranny, they launched out on more ambitious schemes. (402) During the Feast of Unleavened Bread [*e*]—a feast observed by the Jews in memory of their deliverance, ever since they were freed from bondage in Egypt and returned to their native land—these assassins, eluding under cover of night those who might have obstructed them, made a night raid on a little town called Engeddi [*f*]. (403) Those who were capable of resistance were dispersed before they could seize arms and assemble, and were driven out of the town; those who could not flee, women and children numbering more than seven hundred, were massacred. (404) Then they rifled the houses, seized the ripest crops [*g*], and carried off the loot to Masada [*g*]. (405) They made similar raids on all the villages [*a*] around the fortress, and ravaged the whole district, their numbers being daily swelled by a flow of reckless recruits from every side.

Banditry throughout Judaea

(406) Throughout the other parts of Judaea, moreover, the brigands, hitherto dormant, now began to bestir themselves; and as in a body, when the chief member is inflamed, all the others are infected [*b*]; (407) so when strife and disorder broke out in the capital, it gave the rebels in the country free license to plunder; and each gang, after plundering their own village, went off into the wilderness. (408) Then, after joining forces and swearing mutual allegiance, they would organize themselves in companies, smaller than an army but bigger than a band of brigands, which then swooped down upon sanctuaries [*c*] and cities. (409) The unfortunate victims of their attacks suffered as severely as if they had been captives of war, and were unable to retaliate because the raiders, like brigands, had decamped with their prey. In fact, every portion of Judaea was going the way of the ruined metropolis.

399[*c*] *Masada,* which will be described in detail under *War,* VII, 280-300, was the huge fortress as well as the palatial retreat built by Herod after 40 BC. Little is known of Masada between his death and the days following the outset of the war with Rome, though it remained occupied. At the beginning of the revolt in 66, the fortress was held by a Roman garrison (*War* II, 408) which was expelled by the Zealots. Yigael Yadin, who conducted extensive excavations in 1963–1965, uses the following chronological terms to cover Masada's consecutive periods: a) *Herodian* for the tremendous building activities undertaken by Herod; b) *pre-revolt* for buildings and objects dating from AD 55 to 70 including the war years, and c) *garrison,* for finds back to the Roman occupation after 74. The Zealots in occupation (66–74) made use of the luxurious accommodations left by Herod: his northern and western palaces, the luxurious baths, extensive storerooms (where they stored the loot from Engeddi (cf. 402), the administrative buildings, synagogue and water supply installations and the surrounding casemate-wall (made of double walls and divided into chambers) built on the edge of the impregnable plateau. The Zealots built humble temporary abodes and shelters for themselves and their families within the casement-chambers and all around the large structures. A number of scrolls, biblical, apocryphal and sectarian, were also found there, many closely resembling the Qumran scrolls, notably a long scroll of Ben Sirah (Ecclesiasticus a Hebrew writer of parables) as well as numerous ostraca (inscribed shards) containing various names or referring to *tithes* (a tenth part of produce set aside as a religious offering or given to the priests, some of whom were with them at the time in Masada).

400[*d*] *Sicarii,* the extreme wing of revolutionaries, apparently antagonistic both to the moderates and to dissenting Zealots. They had been intimidated at first by Ananus ben Hanan and the Jerusalem government, but when civil war set in they began to act independently, carrying out expeditions of their own.

402[*e*] The Passover.

402[*f*] *Engeddi* was attacked on the Passover when apparently the bulk of the population would be absent on their Easter pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Engeddi was a little town in an oasis some 17 kms north of Masada on the west coast of the Dead Sea, and at the mercy of the revolutionaries entrenched nearby. It was the capital of a district (listed by Josephus among cities of the toparchies of Judea) and famed for its aromatic plants, balsam and perfume-producing workshops, as well as its palm groves and excellent dates (*War* III, 55; IV, 469). Pliny in his *Nat. History,* V, 7, 3, vaunted it as "second only to the Jordan in the fertility of its groves and palm trees." The excavations conducted by B. Mazar and I. Dunayevski (1961–1964) have situated its inhabited area on the plain east and northeast of the mound, and revealed the remains of a new strong fortress built on the mound (Tell Jurn) in the first century AD. A Hasmonean tower, as well as a Roman bathhouse built after AD 70 were found about 660 ft. west of the shore of the Desd Sea with reused stones of the Herodian period of habitation, as illustrated. These remains belong to Stratum II lying below Stratum I of the later Roman and Byzantine period. The bathhouse is related to the Roman period, but a lower structure there reveals the existence of a *mikveh* (purification bath) attributed to the years preceding the First Revolt and war. Documents discovered in the "Cave of the letters" in the Nahl Hever canyon nearby show that during the succeeding period, namely, the Revolt of Bar Kochba (AD 135), Engeddi remained a Jewish village that had become the property of the emperor and Roman garrison stationed there, and it survived into the Byzantine period, as attested also by the remains of a synagogue discovered in 1970, which included a decorated mosaic floor dating to the 5th century AD.

404[*g*] The *ripe crops* relates to the ripening season of field produce which had been harvested earlier than would be the case in other parts of the country, due to the dry tropical climate. This was characteristic of the Jordan Valley-Dead Sea district and the Arabah Valley to the south.

405[*a*] The villages in the southeastern toparchy of Judea listed in *War* I, 507.

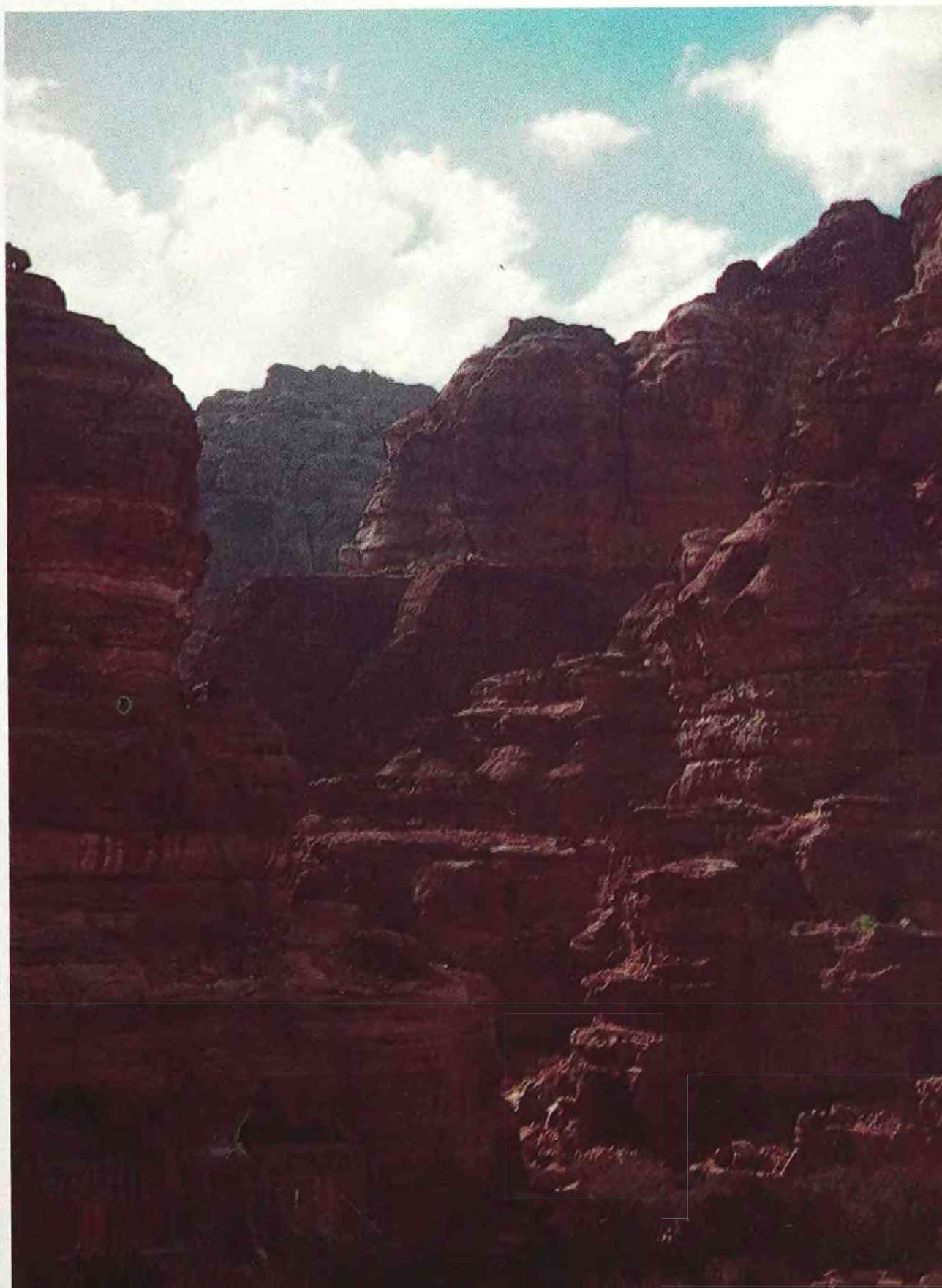
406[*b*] *Infected* a simile used in *War* I, 507.

408[*c*] Apparently synagogues which were then used as gathering places and learning centers, as well as prayer houses throughout the country. Judaea had but one sacred sanctuary, the Temple of Jerusalem, and some synagogues in other parts of the city.

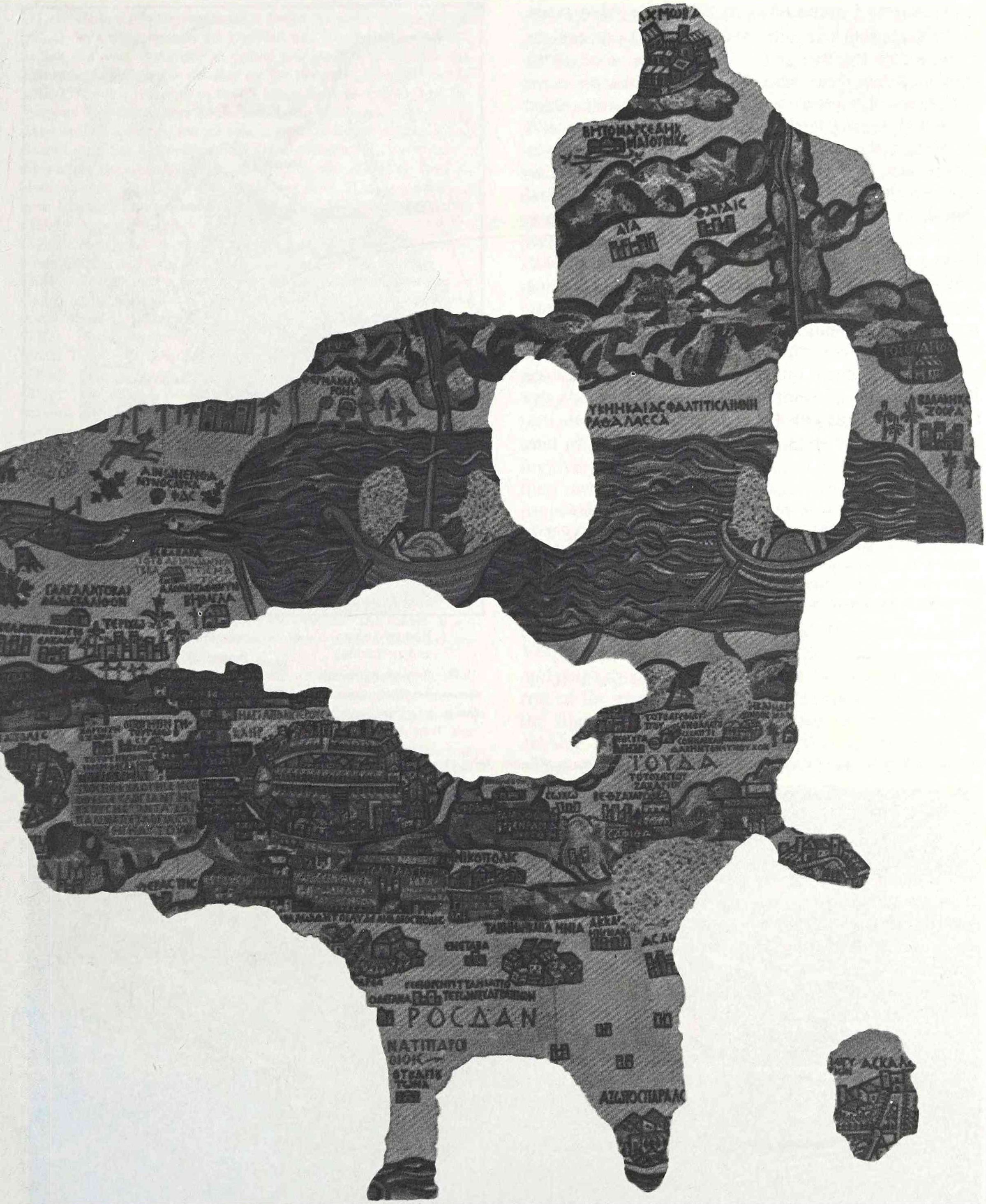
The Dead Sea wilderness overlooking the Dead Sea

Ancient olive trees in Galilee, famed for their gnarled trunks

Rugged outcroppings in the land of Edom in southern Judaea



Five Judaean coins dating to the years of the Great War with Rome



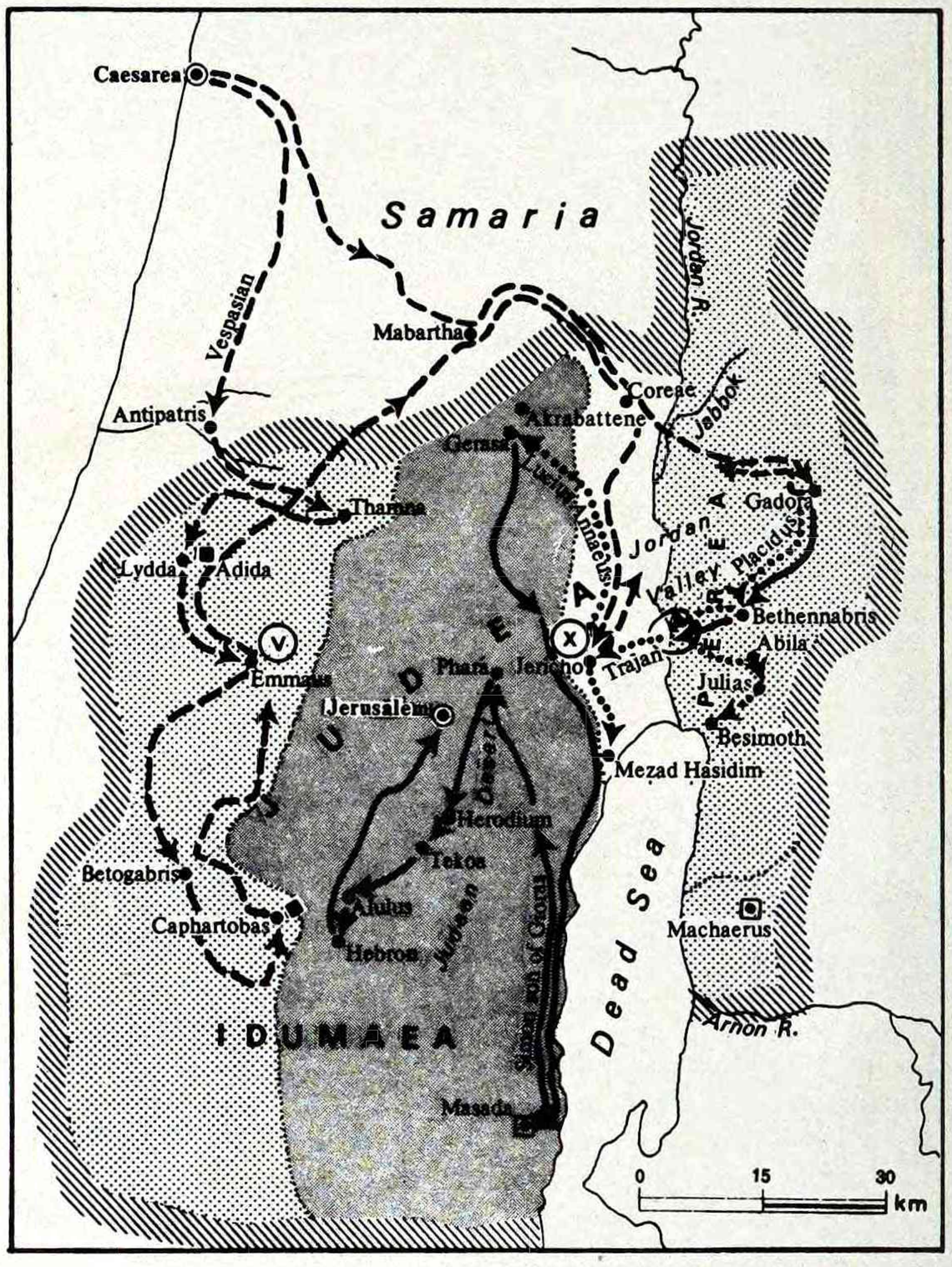
Several interesting items stand out in the Madeba mosaic map dating to the 5th century AD: One, below, is Jerusalem, considerably reduced in size and population after AD 70. The other is the Dead Sea with ships sailing over its waters, while live fish still swim in the Jordan (bottom). The map features dozens of towns west and east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea

3. Vespasian's preparation to advance on Jerusalem

(410) Vespasian was informed of all these proceedings by deserters. For though the insurgents guarded all the exits and slew those who, for whatever reason, came near them, there were some nevertheless who eluded them and, fleeing to the Romans, begged the general to protect the city and rescue the remnant of its inhabitants. (411) They protested that it was due to their loyalty to the Romans that so many had lost their lives and that danger threatened the survivors. (412) Vespasian, already moved by their misfortunes, broke up his camp as if to besiege Jerusalem, but actually his purpose was to deliver it from the existing siege [*a*]. (413) Yet he was obliged first to reduce any places that were left, so as to leave no external impediments to interfere with his operations [*b*]. Accordingly, he marched on Gadara [*c*], the capital of Peraea—a city of some strength—entering it on the fourth of Dystrus [*d*]. (414) For the authorities, unseen by the insurgents, had sent a deputation to him

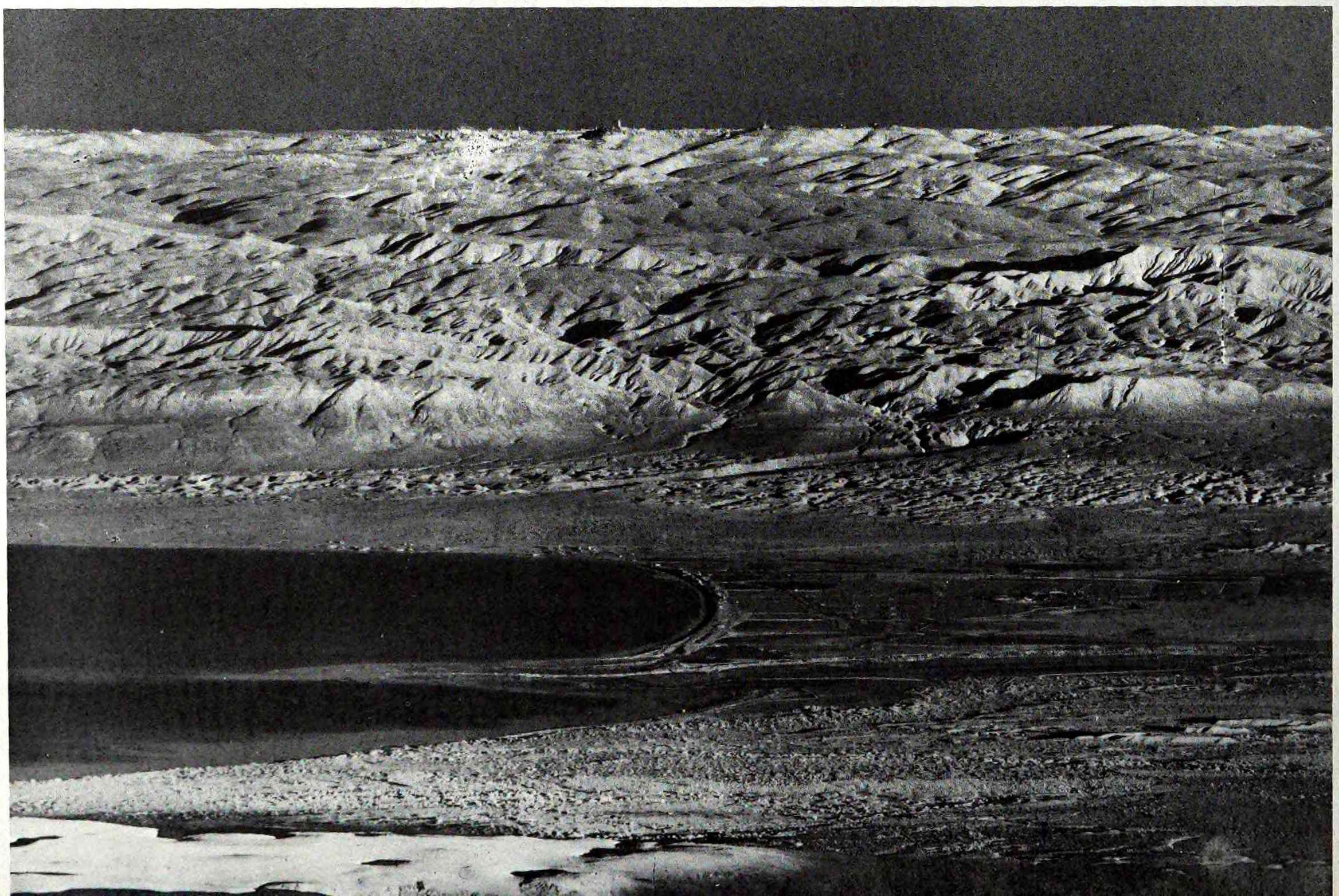
412[*a*] *Existing siege* Cf. *War* IV, 378.

413[*b*] Vespasian was in no hurry to help out the fugitives of Jerusalem, since he doubted whether the moderate citizens were powerful enough to let the contending parties wear themselves out through dissensions. In the meantime, he preferred to conquer areas east of the Jordan for the reason stated in para. 412. He started out on his initial campaign in the spring of AD 68.



The campaigns of AD 68

The Dead Sea, looking westward across the ***Judaean wilderness, Eastern Jerusalem appears on the horizon***



413[*c*] *Gadara* (Gador, mentioned in Jewish sources of the late Roman period). Its ancient remains are identified with Ein Jadur near modern Es-Salt and west of Amman in central Transjordan. It was here that Alexander Jannaeus was defeated by the Nabatean Obodas I (*Antiq.* XIII, 375) but it remained in Jewish hands from the first century BC. Josephus describes it here as the metropolis of Persaea populated by many wealthy residents, and the natural center of Jewish resistance. This Gadara must not be confused with Gader-Gadara or Umm-el-Qeis, a town of the Decapolis, a little southeast of the Sea of Galilee. It will be observed that Vespasian, who started out from Caesarea, advanced upon Jerusalem in a southeasterly direction, as explained in para. 412.

413[*d*] Approx. March 3, AD 68.

419[*a*] Placidus is mentioned above (*War* IV, 57) as Vespasian's astute cavalry commander.

420[*b*] *Bethennabris* is Beth-Nimrin (Tell en-Nimreh), 19 kms south of Gadara in the plain east of the Jordan and in the Wadi Nimrin, lying nearly opposite Jericho and situated on the east side of the Jordan.

422[*c*] Placidus reverted to the same diversionary tactics he used at Mount Tabor (*War* IV, 54).

428[*d*] *Their own men* were people recruited from their town.

434[*a*] The valley is deeper here and its banks drop down along two terraces, one above the other, the lower now known as the *Ghor*. The text mentioning the bank may therefore refer to this terraced formation.

437[*b*] Lake Asphaltitis or the Dead Sea, so called due to the abundance of asphalt patches floating over its heavy waters.

438[*a*] *Abila* is the biblical Abel-Shittim, 7 kms south of Beth Nimra (cf. *War* II, 252).

438[*b*] *Julias* or Livias (Betharamata), 4 kms south of Abel-Shittim.

438[*c*] *Besimoth* = Beth Ha-yeshimoth, the ancient camping site of the Hebrews in the *Plains of Moab* before they entered the Holy Land through the Jordan (Num. 33, 49).

439[*d*] A ship of this type sails the Dead Sea in the large 5th century AD. *Mosaic of Madeba* which depicts the Dead Sea and Judaea. It is a unique historial memento of the countryside and many of the sites mentioned by Josephus (see illustration p. 291).

439[*e*] *Machaerus* The fortress perched east of the upper region of the Dead Sea (*War* I, 171 f; III, 46 contains a description of the fortress and district, see VII, 164–181). John the Baptist was presumably executed here by Herod Antipas, (*Antiq.* XVIII, 5, 2, cf. also Mark 6, 17 ff. and Matthew 14, 3 ff.), though a few historians believe this happened in Herod's palace at Tiberias and not in the locality facing Nabataean territory (D. Flusser).

440[*a*] *Vindex,* C. Julius, a romanized Gallic aristocrat and governor of a Gallic province. Aware of the Senate's rising discontent with Nero, he conspired with various army commanders in the west to raise Galba to the throne, and in the spring of AD 68, rose openly against the tyrant. He was attacked and defeated by Verginius Rufus, commander of the legions in Upper Germany, then committed suicide. Nero died in June, AD 68. This set off the initial series of short-lived accessions and dethronements by three *principes* as Rome tasted the horrors of civil war from which it was at last saved by Vespasian (details below).

440[*b*] *Writers* The best-known contemporary sources were Suetonius, *Nero, Galba;* Dio Cassius, LXIII,– 24 ff; and Tacitus, *Historiae* I, 37–49, 5.

443[*c*]–444[*a*] In Vespasian's second campaign which began around May (Iyar in the Hebrew calendar), he occupied *Antipatris* (biblical Aphek) which had become an important center in the coastal plain since Herod's time, as well as several towns which offered little resistance (see *War* I, 99, 417; II 513 f; 534; see accompanying map); he then marched to Timma in the foothills (444a) and *Lod,* another important town (near the present site of Israel's airport), then to *Yabneh* in the coastal plain. The latter two centers had already been lost by the rebels at the end of AD 67. He captured *Emmaus* (445b; III, 155) the capital of the toparchy by that name in the Judaean foothills, where he set camp and left his fifth legion.

444[*b*] *"Who had submitted":* Among them was also Rabbi *Yohanan ben Zakkai.* Even at this critical phase a few partisans of peace still hoped to remain out of the deadly struggle with Rome, as had been the case with Josephus. It may be at this moment that *Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai,* the pupil and intellectual successor of Rabbi Hillel, succeeded in

with an offer of surrender, both from a desire for peace and partly to protect their possessions, for Gadara had many rich residents. (415) Their opponents knew nothing of the leaders' deputation, and Vespasian was nearly there before they discovered it. They despaired of holding the city themselves, as their enemies within the walls outnumbered them, and also because the Romans could be seen not far away. They decided to flee, but could not bear to do so without spilling blood and exacting punishment from those responsible for their situation. (416) They seized Dolesus, not only by birth and rank the most prominent man in the town, but because he was believed also to be responsible for the deputation; they killed him and in an excess of rage mutilated his dead body before fleeing from the city. (417) The Roman army now appeared, and the people of Gadara greeted Vespasian with acclamation and received from him pledges of security, together with a garrison of cavalry and infantry to deal with sudden attacks of the fugitives; (418) for they had pulled down their walls of their own accord without orders from the Romans, as proof of their devotion to peace and of their inability to make war even if they wanted to.

4. Placidus' defeat of the Gadara fugitives

(419) In pursuit of those who had fled from Gadara, Vespasian sent Placidus [*a*] with five hundred cavalry and three thousand infantry, while he himself, with the rest of the army, went back to Caesarea. (420) When the fugitives suddenly caught sight of the pursuing cavalry, before battle was joined, they swarmed into a village called Bethennabris [*b*]. (421) Here they found a large number of young men and armed them at random, some with their consent, others by force, and then rushed out to attack the troops of Placidus. (422) At the first onset the Romans gave a little ground, meneuvering to draw them further away from the walls [*c*], but when they had got them where they wanted, they encircled them and shot them down with their javelins. (423) The cavalry intercepted their flight, while the infantry destroyed those who were pinned down in entangled masses. (424) The Jews, in fact, were cut to pieces after a display of mere temerity; for as they hurled themselves upon the serried Roman ranks, behind their impenetrable barrier of armor, they could find no loophole for their missiles and were powerless to break the enemy's line, while they themselves were pierced by the enemy's javelins. Like wild beasts they charged the opposing blades. (425) Thus they perished, some struck down by the sword as they faced the enemy, others scattered in disorderly flight by the cavalry.

5. Debacle on the Jordan

(426) Placidus was determined to block their assaults toward the village, (427) so he kept his cavalry mov-

ing past them on that side, and then wheeled around and instantly discharged a well-aimed volley of missiles, killing those who were approaching and intimidating and beating away those further off. But in the end the bravest of them broke through and fled for the walls. (428) Here the sentries found themselves in a quandary: they could not bring themselves to shut out the men of Gadara, and with them their own men [*d*]; but if they let them in they would perish with them. That was in fact what happened. (429) For when the Jews forced their way inside the walls, the Roman cavalry almost managed to burst in with them, and though the villagers succeeded in closing the gates in time, Placidus launched an assault, and after courageously battling till evening, captured the wall and the occupants of the village. (430) The noncombatants were slaughtered wholesale, the ablebodied fled, and the soldiers ransacked the houses, setting the village on fire. (431) The fugitives who escaped, meanwhile, roused the countryside and, by exaggerating their own calamities and, claiming that the entire Roman army was pursuing them, they drove all from their homes in panic, and together with the whole population fled towards Jericho. (432) This was the only city strong enough to encourage any hope of survival of its large population. (433) Placidus, relying on his cavalry and emboldened by his earlier success, pursued them as far as the Jordan, killing all whom he overtook. And when he had driven the whole multitude up to the river, where they were stopped by the current, which was swollen by the rain and had become unfordable, he deployed his troops opposite them. (434) Necessity compelled them to fight, having no way of escape. Extending their forces as far as they could along the river bank [*a*], they faced the missiles and the charges of the horsemen, who wounded many and threw them into the stream below. (435) Fifteen thousand were killed by the Romans, and those who were forced to fling themselves into the Jordan of their own accord were innumerable. (436) Some two thousand two hundred were captured, together with a rich haul of asses, sheep, camels, and oxen.

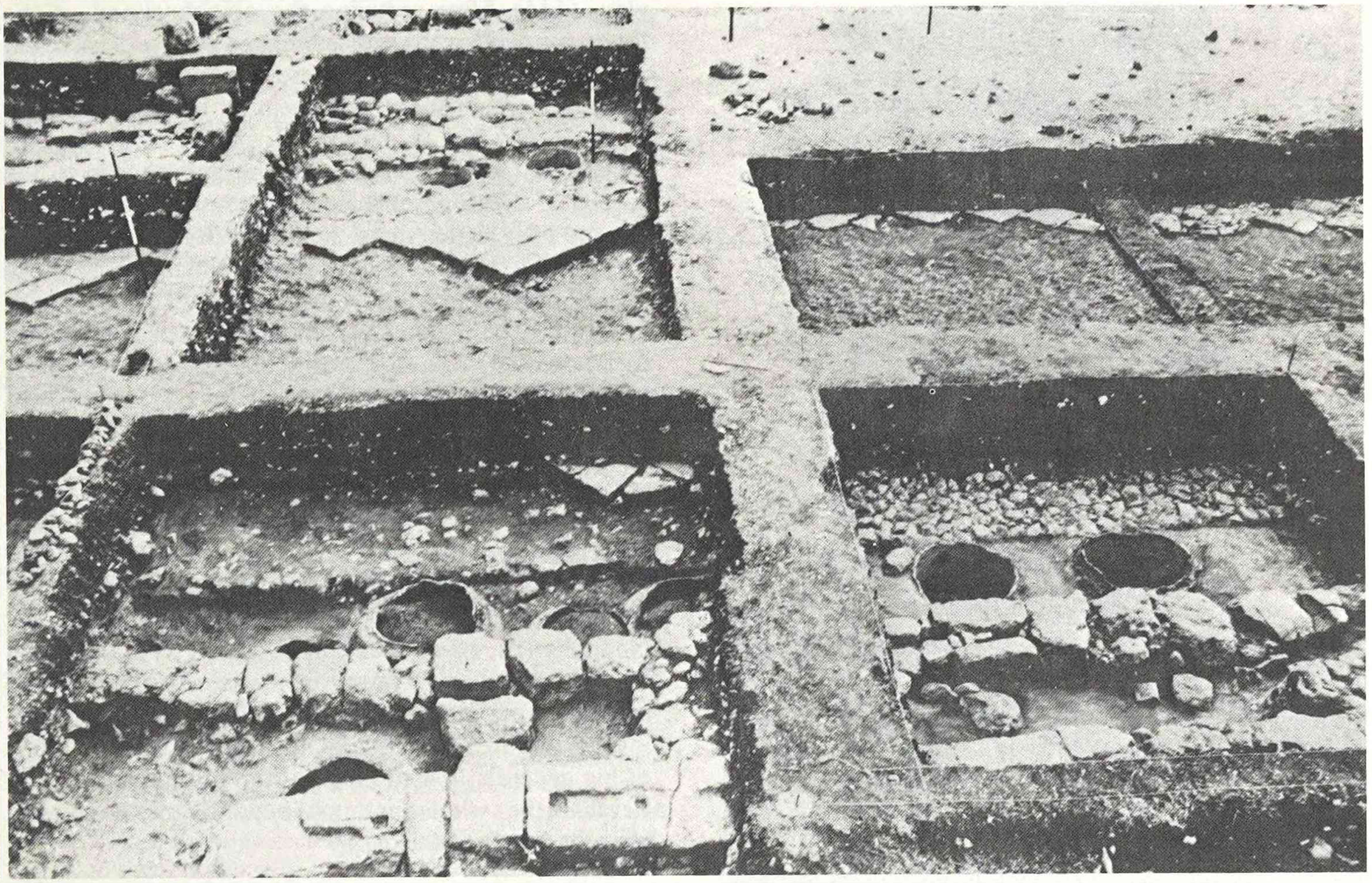
6. (437) This was the heaviest blow suffered by the Jews, and it appeared even heavier than it was; for not only was the whole countryside through which they fled one long trail of slaughter and the Jordan choked with corpses, but the Lake Asphaltitis [*b*] too was filled with dead bodies which the river carried down into it in masses. (438) Placidus, seizing his advantage, hastened to launch attacks on the small surounding towns and villages, capturing Abila [*a*], Julias [*b*], Besimoth [*c*], and all the rest as far as Lake Asphaltitis, then posting into each a garrison of suitable deserters; (439) next he embarked his soldiers on board ship [*d*], and rounded up those who had taken refuge on the lake. Thus all of Peraea submitted or was subdued as far as Machaerus [*e*].

Chapter VIII

1. Vespasian informed of the Gallic revolt; war against the Jews stepped up

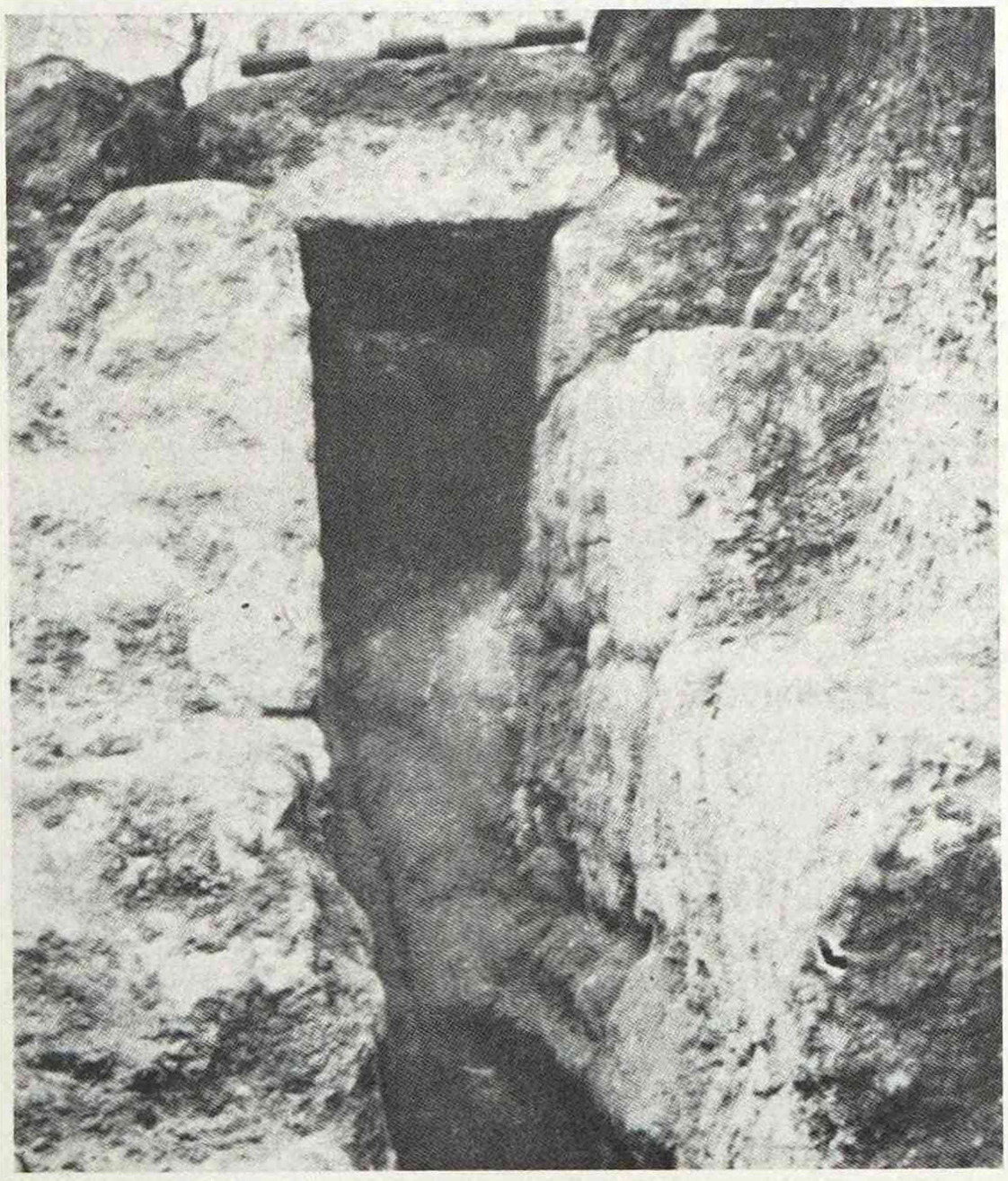
(440) At this time, news was received of the rebellion in Gaul and how Vindex [*a*] and the native chiefs of that country had revolted against Nero, as described in detail by other writers [*b*]. (441) Vespasian's reaction to the news was to step up his campaign, for he already foresaw the coming civil wars and the dangers to the whole empire, and he felt that if he quickly pacified the east, he would lighten the anxiety of Italy. (442) Accordingly, while the winter lasted, he secured the conquered towns and villages with garrisons, posting decurions in the villages and centurions in the towns. He also rebuilt many places that had been laid waste. (443) In the early days of spring, he set out from Caesarea with most of his army and marched to Antipatris [*c*]. After spending two days in restoring order in that town, he advanced the next day, destroying and burning all the surrounding villages on the

A cavalry officer of the First Legion



A paved street of Antipatris with industrial installations on both sides (left and right). The town was captured and destroyed by Vespasian. Vast coin troves were discovered in the excavations

The upper water aqueduct of Emmaus and cascading steps dug in the rock



A paved street and water installations in Emmaus

Molded glass vase in the form of a human head, from Scythopolis (Bethshean), 1st–4th centuries AD

being carried out in a coffin to the Roman camp, according to Talmudic tradition. This episode is not mentioned by Josephus, but it remains a historic fact affirmed by other credible sources, and it is noted here in view of ben Zakkai's impact on post-AD 70 Judaism. The Talmudic sources recorded two traditions concerning his escape: It appears that Vespasian had pacifist spies in the city and knew that Yohanan favored an honorable compromise. When he came to the Roman camp, they recognized him and brought him directly to Vespasian who inquired what he could do in his behalf. Yohanan thereupon made his famous request to reside at Jamnia (Yabneh), whose pacified status was different from other Jewish areas, and then is said to have prophesied Vespasian's rise to power (as Josephus had done before). This occurred apparently in July AD 69 before Vespasian left for Rome or even later. It may be noted that at the beginning of the rebellion, Jewish peasants and landowners had been forced off their land, or compelled to become tenants in their own holdings; other tracts continued to be held as imperial domains (known in Latin as *praedium confiscationes)* applied mainly to sectors which had been directly involved in the rebellion, while other Jewish elements who had tolerated Rome at their critical juncture (e.g. Josephus and Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai) retained their lands or received new estates. One of the imperial domains was that of Jamnia (Yabneh), south of Lydda. Vespasian resettled a group of loyalist elements in both, mainly well-to-do people, and put them under surveillance of authority. (Others were held in custody at Gophna where the high priests and the notables of the people were also held by Titus after they submitted to him.) "According to this tradition (*Babylon. Talmud Gittin* 56b) Yohanan, when he presented himself before the emperor, received from him 'Yamnia and its sages' and 'the dynasty of Rabban Gamaliel' (that is permission for the descendants of the revered line of teachers and leaders of the community of Rabbi Hillel and Gamaliel) to return to their former tasks of officially teaching the Law. Subsequently, Yohanan and some other teachers were allowed to resume their normal activities under Roman guardianship (cf. *War* VI, 229–231). However, according to the earlier Palestinian traditions, he succeeded in receiving permission only by 'observing the commandments and studying the Torah.' According to another source, 'he only succeeded in gaining release from captivity and that of several persons close to him (*Avot de Rabbi Nathan;* 4 *Lament Rabba* 1) The Palestinian traditions seem perferable'." (S. Safrai, *ibid.*, p. 404–405).

444[*c*] The position and remains of *Emmaus* mark it a representative rural town in ancient Judaea. It is situated at the eastern end of the Ayalon valley—scene of Joshua's victory over the Gibeonites (Josh. 10, 12). At the junction of the maritime plain and the mountains, Emmaus

way. (444) After reducing the neighborhood of the toparchy of Thamna [*a*], he moved to Lydda [*a*], and Jamnia [*a*]. Since both these towns were subdued already, he quartered upon them an adequate number of those who had submitted [*b*], and advanced to Emmaus [*c*]. (445) After seizing the approaches to the capital of this toparchy, he fortified a camp, and leaving the fifth legion there, he marched with the rest of his forces to the province of Beth Leptenpha [*d*]. (446) He devastated this and the neighboring district with fire, as well as the outskirts of Idumaea, while building fortresses [*e*] in suitable positions. (447) Finally, after he had captured two villages in the very middle of Idumaea, Betabris and Caphartoba, he killed over ten thousand inhabitants, took over a thousand prisoners, (448) expelled the rest of the population, and stationed a large division of his own forces in the district, who overran and devastated most of the hill country. (449) He then returned at the head of his remaining forces to Emmaus and from there, by way of Samaria and past Neapolis [*f*], or as the natives call it, Mabartha [*f*], he went down to Coraea [*g*], encamping there on the second of the month of Daesius [*d*]. (450) On the following day he reached Jericho, where Trajan [*a*], one of his generals, joined him, with the force he led from Peraea, the whole country beyond Jordan having already been subdued [*b*].

2. Description of Jericho, the Jordan valley and the Dead Sea

(451) The bulk of the population, without waiting for their arrival, had fled from Jericho to the hill country opposite Jerusalem, but a large number had remained behind and were put to death. The Romans found the city deserted. (452) Jericho is situated in a plain, above which rises a barren mountain range of great length which extends northwards to the Scythopolis area, (453) and southwards to the region of Sodom and the far end of Lake Asphaltitis. This hill district is rugged and uninhabited because of its sterility. (454) Opposite it, and flanking the Jordan, rises a second range, beginning at Julias [*a*] in the north and running southwards, parallel to the former range, as far as Somora, which borders on Petra [*b*] in Arabia [*b*]. Inside this range is the so-called Iron Mountain [*b*] jutting out into Moab. (455) The area between the two mountain ranges [*a*] is called the Great Plain [*a*], stretching from the village of Ginnabris [*a*] to the Lake Asphaltitis, (456) and measuring twelve hundred furlongs in length, and a hundred and twenty in width [*b*]. It is intersected by the Jordan and contains two lakes, Lake Asphaltitis [*c*] and Lake Tiberias, contrasting in character. The former is salty and sterile, the latter sweet and prolific. (457) In the summertime the plain is burnt up, and the excessive drought makes the air unwholesome [*d*]. (458) For it is entirely waterless, except for the Jordan, which explains why the palm groves on the banks of the river

occupies an important strategic position on the road that ascends from the coast to Jerusalem through Beth Horon, where battles were fought between the Hasmoneans and Seleucid Greeks. It is first mentioned in I Maccabees (3, 40, 57; 4, 3) as the place where the armies of the Seleucids encamped in their third campaign against Judas the Maccabee and where they were defeated in 166 BC, and their camp captured. In the middle of the first century BC Emmaus was the capital of one of the toparchies of Judaea. A Roman road led from Emmaus to Jerusalem. The Roman commander Cassius sold its inhabitants into slavery. In 4 BC after Herod's death, it became the center of an insurrection led by the shepherd Athrongaeus. In retaliation, Varus, the proconsul of Syria, set fire to the city. Several tombstones found there bearing names of the Roman soldiers indicate that the fifth legion was encamped in the city during the First Revolt, as is stated in our text (444–445). The excavators were able to distinguish remains of interesting structures: a) recesses carved out of the rock and foundations of thick walls dating to the second and third centuries BC; b) the remains of two aqueducts at ground level leading water from an adjacent spring to the town of Emmaus; c) oil and wine-presses carved out of rock; d) the remains of a Roman villa of the second or third century AD flanked by a long courtyard and surrounded by porticoes along the northern side of the building, decorated with mosaic floors, with flower and other ornamented borders; e) the earliest church found there, a third-century Christian basilica, and later Christian (Crusader) structures which commemorated the events related in Luke 24, 13–33.

445[*d*] Continuing south, he conquered *Beth Litepha* (445[*d*], *Beth Govrin,* and *Kfar Tov*. He stationed there a cohort which made incursions into *Idumaea* (southern Judaea). The Romans erected guard-posts in strategic positions and at crossroads (446[*e*]) i.e. near Beth Litepha.

446[*e*] It will be noted that most of the above towns like Lod, Yamnia, Emmaus, Beth Govrin were thickly populated, and it is not likely that they offered serious resistance, if any, to Vespasian's legions. On such occasions when Josephus refers to their destruction and burning, it appears from later evidence that they survived and became vital Jewish centers in the second century AD. After this Vespasian cut a wide swath in the foothills of Idumaea. By then Romans had occupied almost half of the Judean districts south of Caesarea.

449[*f*] In the ensuing line of march (see map), Vespasian moved back through captured territory to the district of Samaria and reached the village of *Maabartha,* meaning a pass, situated between the historic mountains of Ebal and Gerizim (later rebuilt as *Neapolis,* the New Town, or Nablus in Arabic). A valley east of Maabartha (the present Wadi Fara) leads to the Jordan Valley. Though Maabartha lay close to biblical Shechem, Josephus does not mention it because the Samaritan Shechem already lay in ruins since its destruction by John Hyrcanus in 128 BC. The tragic events in the neighboring Gerasa are described in para. 487–489.

449[*g*] *Coraea* The Romans encamped there on June 2. The site is identified with Tell-el-Mazar on the border between Samaria and Judea (*War* I, 134; *Antiq.* XIV, 49).

450[*a*] *Trajan,* commanding the tenth legion, and father of the future emperor of that name (see *War* III, 289f).

450[*b*] See map indicating the areas in Judaea and Transjordan which were subdued by the Romans in the summer of AD 68. Josephus' account does not make note of the fact—which was only ascertained by archaeological discovery some nineteen centuries later—that the Romans had also occupied the northern shores of the Dead Sea (called Lake Asphaltitis) and had destroyed the *Fort of the Hasidim* known to us as *Khirbet Qumran,* the famous center of the Essene sect where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found (described in *War* II, 120–161).

454[*a*] *Julias,* east of the Jordan, opposite Jericho (*War* II, 438).

454[*b*] *Somora, Petra, Arabia:* referring to the mountain range of Moab, which stretches as far south as the mountains of Edom and Petra, the capital of the Arabia so-called (or theNabatean kingdom). The Iron Mountains presumably located in Gilead near the river Jabbok.

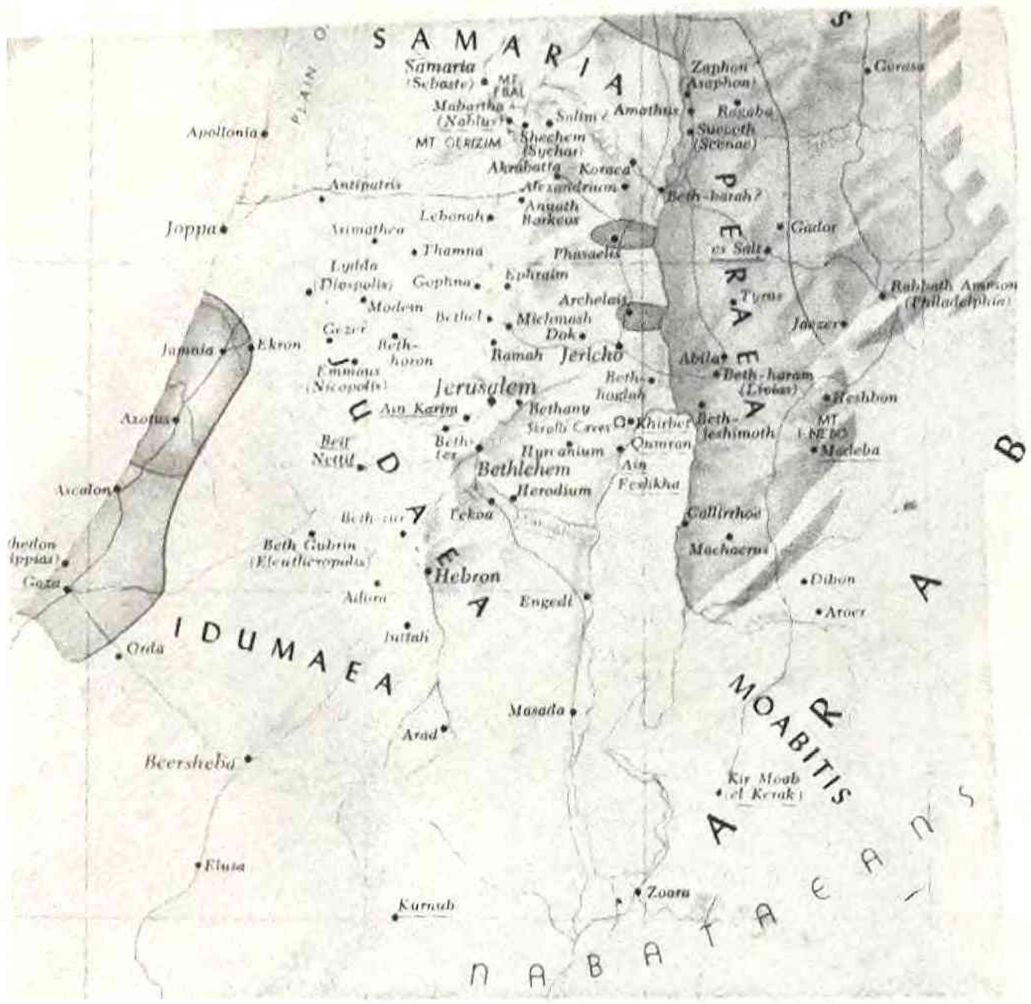
455[*a*] *The Great Plain* is the Jordan Valley or the Ghor which stretches from Sinnabris (not Ginnabris as in the text, cf. III, 447) south of the Sea of Galilee, to the Dead Sea and the Plains of Moab (Num. 22, 1; 33, 49). It is famed for its ancient palm groves and fertility.

456[*b*] 1200 × 120 furlongs = 218 21 kms is an unlikely figure. The length of the meandering course of the river Jordan is 167 kms and actual length 104 as the crow flies. Hence, Josephus apparently includes in his estimate the length of the two lakes.

456[*c*] The renown of Lake Asphaltitis is attributed to its asphalt which was greatly in demand for caulking ships and, by the Egyptians, for embalming their mummies.

457[*d*] *Unwholesome* probably because of endemic fevers caused by the mosquitoes and flies of the marshes in the area.

The emperor Nero was wont to appear in his musical performances and artistic activities



Towns and villages of Samaria, Judaea and Idumaea, many of which were devastated by Vespasian's armies

459[*e*] The spring of Elisha (modern Ein el-Sultan, the spring of historical Jericho) is named after the story in II Kings 19, 20 with some embellishments, to emphasize its curative powers.

459[*f*] *Jesus* Joshua, son of Nun, who led the Hebrews across the Jordan.

466[*g*] Comparing the effects of intermittent irrigation in other parts of the country to permanent irrigation in this fertile tropical area, improved also by canals leading from the spring and its wide pool.

467[*a*] 70×20 furlongs = 33×13 kms.

468[*b*] Jericho has always been the "city of palm trees" since biblical times (Deut. 34, 3; Jud. 1, 16) and in the Second Temple period when, in Herod's early days, Mark Antony donated it to Cleopatra (cf. notes *War* I, 36 f). The products of the palm fruit were date-wine and date-honey, both for local consumption and for export, as noted by Roman historians and geographers. Judaea was famous for its dates.

469[*c*] *Date-honey* or syrup, as well as carob and bee-honey, were the main sweeteners in antiquity.

469[*d*] *The balsam* of Jericho is mentioned by Strabo (XVI, 763) and other ancient writers. Josephus speaks also of the balsam of Engeddi (*Antiq.* IX, 7; cf. note War I, 361).

469[*e*] *Myrobalsam* the ben-nut oil is used to season meat.

470[*a*] The fertile plain of Gennesareth is described in equally glowing terms (*War* III, 516 ff.)

473[*b*] Comparable to the waters of Gennesareth.

474[*c*] 150 × 60 = about 18.5 and 11.5 kms respectively.

474[*d*] The Dead Sea lies 1200 ft. (366 m.) below the level of the Mediterranean except in drought years when its level is lower.

476[*a*] Cf. 456 above.

476[*b*] The buoyance of these waters, whose saline content is five times that of the ocean, prevents bodies and various materials from sinking to the bottom. Strabo and Tacitus, however, confused the Dead Sea with the Egyptian Lake Serbonis when they specifically meant the former.

480[*a*] The weird belief that the menstrual flow could loosen up bitumen was entertained by Poseidonius (second-first centuries BC). Strabo, Tacitus (*Histor.* V, 6), and Pliny (V, 15) tell us that wealthy Romans would pay liberally to secure this ashpalt for medicinal purposes (cf. *War* VII, 181), because such secretions could be used to extract a certain root possessing medicinal properties.

482[*b*] Namely, 110×37.3 kms a greatly exaggerated figure. The Dead Sea measured in 1919 only 76.3×15.7 kms and its measurements vary with rainfall and season, but not to the extent suggested in the text. In

are more luxuriant and bear richer crops than those further off.

3. Elisha's spring near Jericho

(459) Near Jericho, however, there is a copious spring [*e*] admirably suited for irrigation. It gushes up close to the old city, the first in the land of the Canaanites to fall before the arms of Jesus [*f*], the son of Naue, commander of the Hebrews. (460) This spring, it is said, at first not only blighted fruit crops, but produced miscarriages in women. Indeed it proved unwholesome and destructive of everything, until it was reclaimed and transformed into a salubrious and life-giving stream by the prophet Elisha, the disciple and successor of Elijah. (461) When he had been welcomed by the people of Jericho and hospitably entertained by them, he repaid them and their country by an undying favor. (462) He went out to the spring and threw into the stream an earthenware vessel full of salt, and then, raising the guiltless right hand to heaven and pouring propitiatory libations upon the ground, he implored the earth to purify the water and open sweeter channels. (463) Then he called upon heaven to mingle its waters with more lifegiving airs, and give the people round about an abundance of fruits and children, and an unfailling supply of water conducive to their production, so long as they remained righteous. (464) With these prayers, accompanied by many ritual acts with his hands, using his skill, he changed the nature of the spring so that the water that had hitherto brought childlessness and famine, from then on became a source of fertility and plenty. (465) Indeed, such are its powers that if the irrigated water but skims the soil, it is more salubrious than other sources of water that soak in and saturate it. (466) Thus, while the benefit derived from other streams is slight, even if freely used [*g*], this tiny stream yields an ample return. (467) In fact this spring waters more land than all others, permeating a plain seventy furlongs in length and twenty in width [*a*], and satisfying the needs of very beautiful and luxurious orchards and parks. (468) Of the date palms [*b*] which it waters there are numerous varieties, different in flavor and in medicinal properties. (469) The richer species of their fruit, when pressed under foot, yield a large quantity of honey [*c*] not much inferior to that of bees, also abundant in the region. Here, too, the juicy balsam grows [*d*], the most valuable of all the local products, the cypress, and the myrobalanus [*e*], so that it would be no exaggeration to call the spot divine—a place where the rarest and loveliest plants grow in such abundance. (470) As regards its other fruits, it would be hard to find another region in the world to compare with it, so large is the yield from whatever is sown [*a*]. (471) I attribute this to the warmth of the air and the fertilizing power of the water. The warmth draws out the growing plants and makes them spread, while the moisture enables them all to take firm root and supplies them strength for the

summer, when the surrounding region is so parched that one can scarcely venture outside. (472) If the water is drawn before sunrise and then exposed to the air, it becomes extremely cold and quite opposite to the atmosphere around it [*b*]; (473) on the other hand, in winter it warms up and is pleasant to bathe in. Moreover, the climate is so mild that the inhabitants dress in linen when it snows in the rest of Judaea. (474) The distance from Jerusalem is a hundred and fifty furlongs [*c*] and sixty [*c*] from the Jordan. The country between Jericho and Jerusalem is desolated and rocky; between Jericho and the Jordan the ground is lower [*d*], though equally wild and barren. (475) Of Jericho and its great advantages, enough has been said.

4. Description of Lake Asphaltitis and the Dead Sea; Vespasian's visit

(476) The natural characteristics of Lake Asphaltitis also merit description. Its waters, as I have said [*a*], are bitter and sterile, but due to their buoyancy [*b*] bring up to the surface even the heaviest objects thrown into them. It is difficult, even by deliberate effort, for a body to sink to the bottom [*b*]. (477) Thus when Vespasian came to explore the lake, he ordered some people who could not swim to be cast with their hands tied behind them into the deep water, and found that they all came to the surface as if blown upward by a current of air. (478) Remarkable as well is its change of color: thrice daily it alters its appearance and reflects the sun's rays with different tints. (479) Again, in many places it throws up black masses of asphalt resembling in their shape and size headless bulls. (480) The laborers on the lake row to these lumps, seize them and haul them into their boats. When these are full, it is not easy to unload the asphalt which, because of its tenacious and glutinous quality, sticks to the boat until loosened by a woman's menstrual secretions, to which alone it yields [*a*]. (481) It is useful not only for caulking ships, but also for curing bodily ailments, as it forms an ingredient of many medicines. (482) The length of this lake is five hundred and eighty furlongs [*b*], measured in a line reaching Zoara [*c*] in Arabia, and its width one hundred and fifty [*b*]. (483) Next to it lies the land of Sodom [*d*], which in olden days was a land rich in crops and in the affluence of its various cities, but now entirely incinerated. (484) It is said that it was burnt up by thunderbolts due to the impiety of its inhabitants. Indeed, there are still marks of the fire from heaven and faint outlines of five cities to be seen. The fruits which grow there still contain ashes; they have all the appearance of edible fruit, but when plucked with the hand, break up into smoke and ashes [*d*]. (485) To this extent the legends about the land of Sodom are confirmed by visual evidence.

Chapter IX

1. Vespasian's setting up of his camps

(486) In order to besiege Jerusalem on all sides,

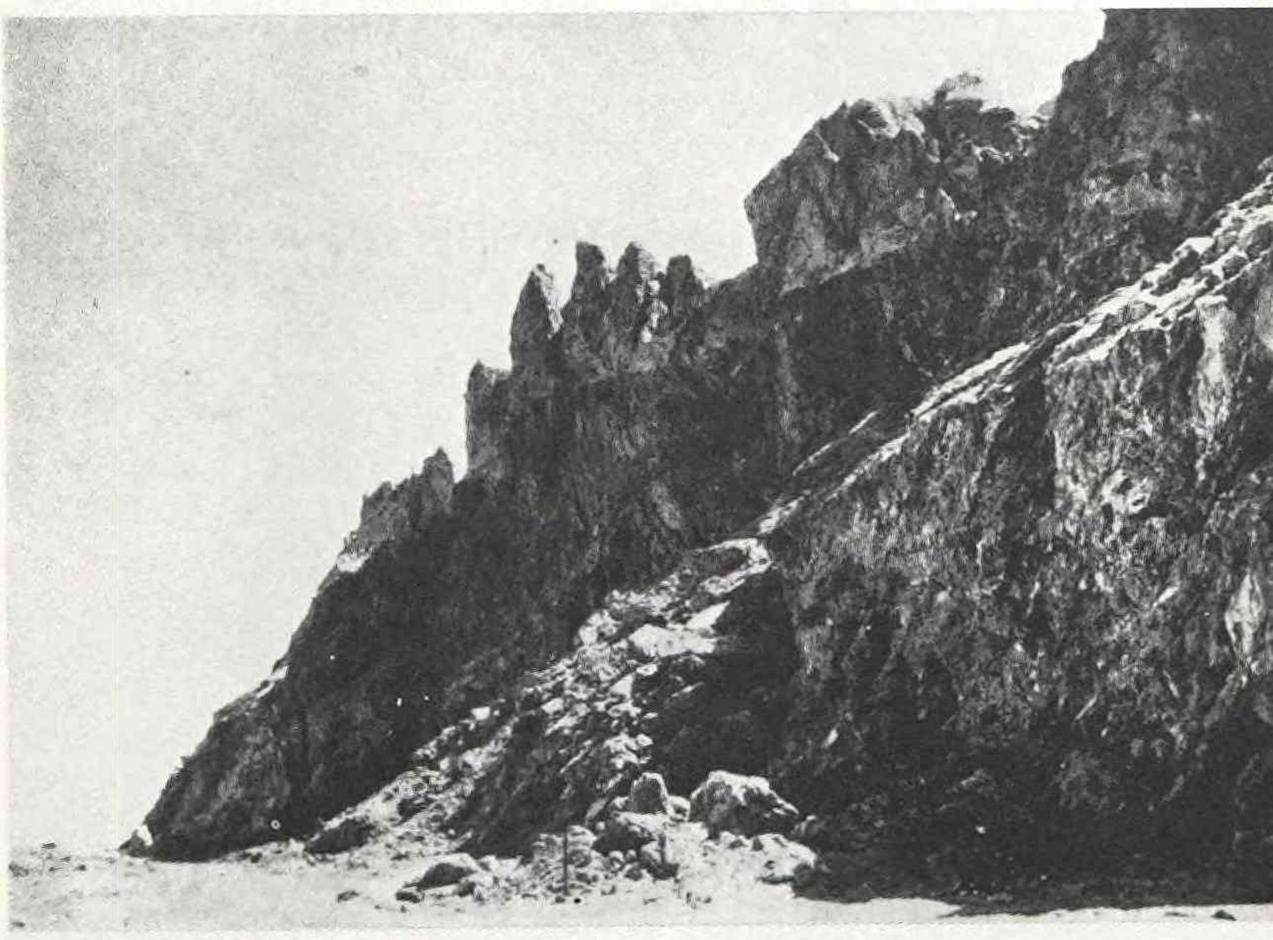
fact, its southern lagoon seems to have been shallower in Herodian times, as it is today, namely after 1979.

482[*c*] *Zoar* is mentioned in the Bible together with the "cities of the valley of Siddim" (Gen. 18; 19, 22) and is sought, according to Josephus, south of the shallow lagoon, in "Arabia" (namely Nabatean territory). Zoar is identical with Ghor-es-Safi, a well-watered large oasis at the southeastern end of the Dead Sea, though no traces of biblical times were found there. It is generally admitted that any traces of habitation were covered by the accumulation of silt carried by the brook *Zered* which ends at Safi. However, some ruins of the Roman and Byzantine period and Jewish tombstones have been found a mile southeast of Safi and may relate to the more ancient settlement.

483[*d*] The story of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain, told in Gen. 18-19, suggests that Sodom had been located at the southern end of the Dead Sea and Josephus seems to concur. The name Sodom, however, has been preserved in the Arabic *Jebel Usdum* (Mt. Sodom) a hill of table salt near the southwestern shore. Moreover, the similar geological formation of Jebel Usdum and the Lisan Peninsula on the opposite (eastern) shore suggests that they were linked by dry land in the past, and that a tectonic disturbance has caused the sinking of the southern end below the level of the sea. The geologist D. Neev has deduced from climatic observations that this lake had undergone phases of partial desiccation in the past and that the latest phase lasted from the second part of the third millennium BC and ended only a few centuries ago. According to these observations, this part of the sea, from biblical times to the days of the Crusades, was dry enough and passable from the *Lisan* peninsula (D. Neev-Emery, *The Dead Sea*, Jerusalem, 1967). The geological formation of the northern and southern areas are quite different, as the latter is only 18 ft. deep and the former over 1200; therefore the southern lagoon was dry in some historical periods. Indeed, in Herodian times a road to Moab (east of the Dead Sea) passed through a ford which today is barely under water. Most excavators have therefore looked for Sodom at the southeastern end (see map opposite IV, 376) and the ruins and ancient cemeteries of Bab-e-drà (approx. 2300-1900 BC) may lend some historic veracity to the remote origin of the story of Sodom and Gomorrah.

484[*d*] These are the bitter and porous "Sodom apples" so-called, soft to the touch but when pressed, burst and crack, leaving in the hand a row of small seeds and a few ligaments, due to the alcaline salts which impregnate the soil. The old scene of desolation, graphically speaking, has not lost its impact, but the region is rapidly developing into an international tourist and health resort.

Western shore of the Dead Sea.



Vespasian established camps at Jericho and Adida [*a*], garrisoning each with a mixed force of Romans and auxiliaries. (487) He also sent Lucius Annius to Gerasa [*b*] and gave him a squadron of cavalry and an ample number of infantry. (488) Annius took the town by assault, put to death a thousand of the younger men who had failed to escape, enslaved the women and children, allowed the soldiers to plunder everything of value, and then set fire to the houses before he advanced against the surrounding villages. (489) The able-bodied fled, the weak perished, and all that was left was consigned to the flames. (490) Now that the war had engulfed the whole region of mountain and plain, it was impossible to leave Jerusalem. Those who wanted to desert were closely watched by the Zealots, and those who did not favor the Romans were shut in by the army which surrounded the city on every side.

2. The interruption of Vespasian's campaign by disturbing news from Rome

(491) Vespasian had returned to Caesarea and was getting ready to march his entire force against Jerusalem itself, when news reached him that Nero had met a violent death after reigning for thirteen years (eight months) [*a*] and eight days. (492) I might also relate how the emperor had wantonly abused his position by entrusting the administration to those utter scoundrels, Nymphidius and Tigellinus [*b*], both worthless freedmen; (493) how when these two plotted against him, he was deserted by all his guards, escaped with four faithful freedmen, and died in the suburbs by his own hand [*b*]; or how those who had brought him down soon paid the penalty [*c*]—but this is not relevant to my narrative. (494) Nor do I propose to tell about the war in Gaul and how it ended, how Galba [*d*], proclaimed emperor, returned to Rome from Spain, and how he was accused of stinginess [*d*] by the soldiers; then how he was treacherously slain in the middle of the Roman Forum and succeeded by Otho [*e*]; (495) of Otho's campaign against Vitellius' generals and his overthrow, followed by disturbances under Vitellius and fighting around the Capitol; and the way Antonius Primus and Mucianus destroyed Vitellius and the German legions, finally bringing the civil war to an end [*f*]. (496) But I must excuse myself from narrating any of these events in detail, because they are commonly known and have been described by many Greek and Roman historians. However, to ensure continuity and coherence in the narrative, I have summarized the various events.

Vespasian's deferment of the campaign; his sending of Titus to Galba

(497) Vespasian's response to the news was to put off his expedition against Jerusalem, while he waited anxiously to see upon whom the empire would devolve after Nero's death; (498) then, when he heard that Galba [*a*] was emperor, he refrained from undertaking

486[*a*] *The beginning of Vespasian's second campaign* This para. is a sequel to 451 and relates to the occupation of *Adida*, biblical Hadid, Arabic Haditheh, 5 kms east of Lod and about 20 northwest of Jerusalem.

487[*b*] *Gerasa* is Geresh, the capital of the toparchy of Akrabata, in Samaria, and the hometown of *Simon ben Giora*, which Vespasian devastated. The reason for Annius' attack will become evident in the sequel (para. 503). The sequences of the campaign are interrupted by the author at this point by momentous events occurring at the heart of the Roman Empire: they are summed up by historians as "The Year of the Four Emperors" from Galba to Vespasian.

491[*a*] Nero reigned from October 13 AD 54 to June 9, 68 namely 13 years, seven months and 28 days, while Cassius calculates this in round numbers as 13 years and eight months. Josephus makes the reign ten days longer (*War* II, 168, 180, 204) due to other slight discrepancies.

492[*a*]–493[*b*] *Nero's death* What had finally driven him to despair was his abandonment by advisers and guards and the action of the Senate in declaring him a public enemy. But even then this body was in no position to play a really decisive role, and the troubled period which followed indicates that it could do little to influence events, and was compelled to confer the imperial titles on a succession of men who owed their success to military support. When the Praetorian guard rebelled, Nero found refuge in the villa of his freedman Phaon, and finally plunged a dagger into his own throat. Just before his death he is said to have whined "What an artist dies in me."

493[*c*] *Penalty* Nymphidius Sabinus was co-prefect of the Praetorians, and the notorious Ophonius Tigellinus, his colleague or co-prefect, was the most nefarious influence on Nero. The former had persuaded his soldiers to renounce their allegiance to the emperor as he meant to seize the empire for himself, but was slain by the friends of Galba, the new rising star. Tigellinus was driven to commit suicide on the subsequent succession of Otho. The sequence of events is summed up below. Juvenal wrote in irony "dare to portray Tigellinus, and you will be burnt alive" (*Sat.* I, 155).

494[*d*] *Galba*, governor of Spain who was backed by Nymphidius, was accepted as emperor by the Senate and the praetorians, but not many days passed before his parsimony, tactlessness, and unfortunate choice of advisers alienated him from both the population and the soldiers. Hearing the commotion outside the palace, he went to the Forum and was brutally assassinated on January 15, AD 69 after a reign of seven months.

494[*e*] *Otho* Hailed by the Praetorian Guard, his reign was destined to last only three months because the Roman legions in Upper Germany had already proclaimed their commander *Aulus Vitellius* as emperor, the son of a distinguished senator.

495[*f*] *Vitellius* invaded Italy; civil war followed, and Otho's army was defeated at Badriacum, and he committed suicide. Vitellius entered Rome like a conqueror, but his gluttonous personal character earned him nothing but contempt. By the summer of 69, a strong feeling had arisen among Romans in the East that the rule of Vitellius could not be tolerated. The end of Vitellius' career and later incidents are narrated below, para. 545–548, 585 ff.

498[*a*] Galba was named emperor on June 9, AD 68, and was killed on January 15, AD 69.

499[*b*] *Achaea* lies along the Gulf of Corinth in the southern part of Greece, facing the open Mediterranean to the west and the shipping lanes to Italy.

499[*c*] The parenthesis (about the coming of winter) accounts apparently for the longer time taken for Titus' journey.

499[*d*] Cf. 498[*a*].

502[*e*] Vespasian felt that further inaction on his part would seal his fate. The sequel of his career is related in 588 ff.

503[*a*] *Simon bar Giora*, who had defeated Cestius Gallus at the pass of Beth-Horon (*War* II, 521, 652 f), recruited a peasant army at Acrabatene, whereupon Ananus (Hanan) sent a large force to dislodge him; the Idumaeans first journed him (IV, 353).

503[*b*] *Gerasa* Geresh, cf. 487[*b*].

504[*c*] *Acrabatene;* cf. III, 48.

504[*d*] *Masada* Simon, like the Sicarii of Masada, was a bitter enemy of the moderate leaders in Jerusalem, which is why the former welcomed him—though warily—into their stronghold. His rise to leadership among

any venture pending the receipt of a new directive from him concerning the war. But he sent his son Titus to pay homage to him and to receive his instructions concerning the Jews. King Agrippa also embarked with Titus to meet Galba with the same object in mind. (499) But while they sailed in warships around through Achaea [*b*] (because it was winter) [*c*], Galba was assassinated after a reign of seven months and as many days [*d*]. He was succeeded by Otho, the rival claimant to the sovereignty. (500) Agrippa decided, nevertheless, to complete his journey to Rome, in no way deterred by what had happened. (501) But Titus, by a divine impulse, sailed back from Greece to Syria and proceeded with all speed to rejoin his father at Caesarea. (502) In their suspense about these momentous affairs—for the Roman rule was tottering—the two commanders held up operations against Judaea, feeling that an attack on a foreign country would be inopportune at a time when they were so anxious about things at home [*e*].

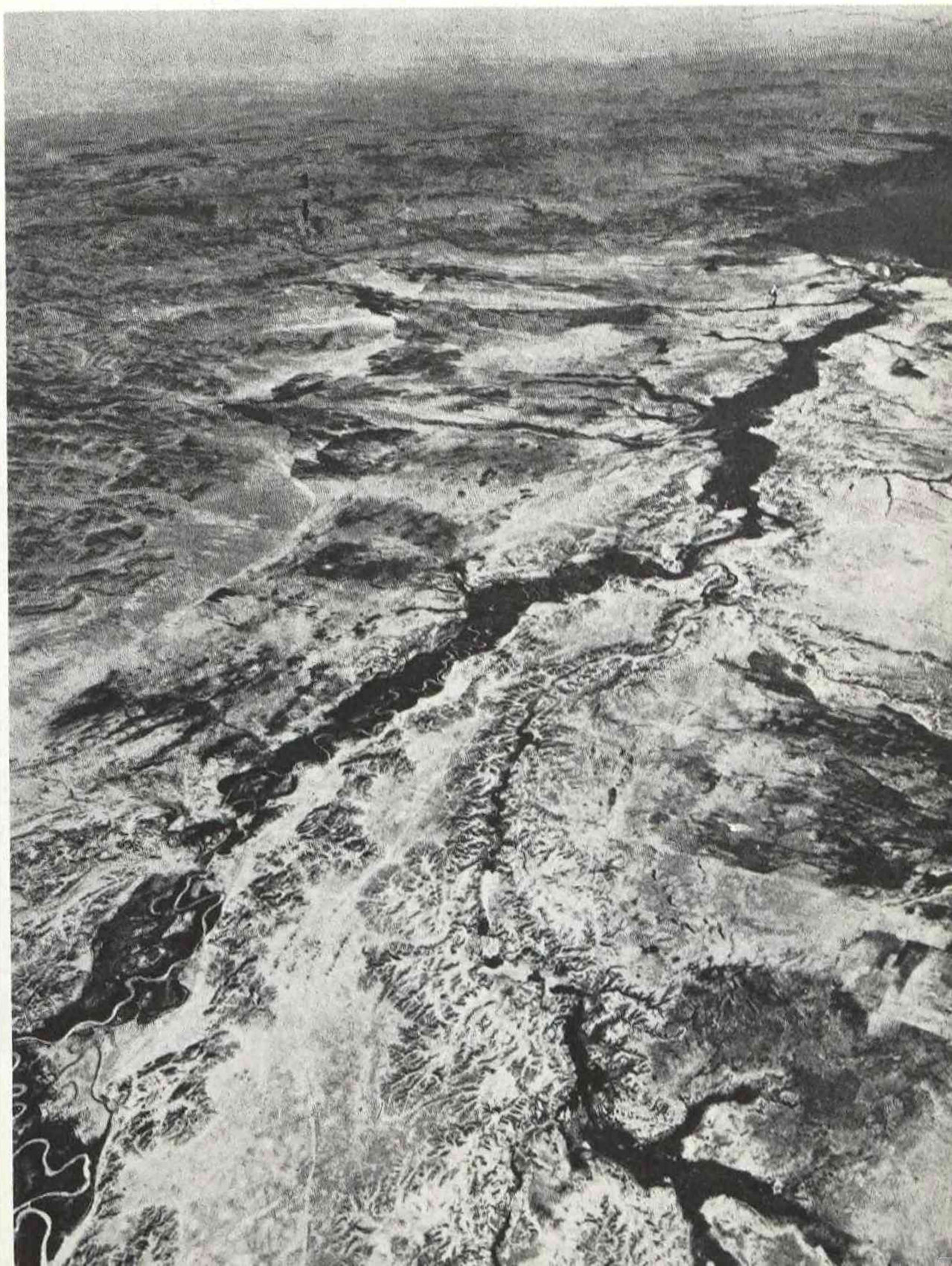
3. The rebels at Masada joined by Simon, son of Giora

(503) But another war was now threatening Jerusalem. There was a certain Simon, son of Giora [*a*], a native of Gerasa [*b*], less crafty than John, who was already master of the city, (504) but superior in physique and daring—the quality which had caused Ananus, the high priest, to banish him from the toparchy of Acrabatene [*c*], which he had once com-

The kingdom of Adiabene, whose royal family had converted to Judaism, was situated in the heart of the Parthian empire, east of the Tigris river. The close association between Adiabene and the Jews of Judaea was a cause of serious worry to Rome

Italy and surrounding countries of the Roman Empire involved in the Civil War (AD 68–70)

The Jordan and Jordan valley descending to the Dead Sea, as seen from the air



the rebels and his potential danger to the Romans account for the expedition led by Lucius Annius against Gerasa (487[*b*]), Simon's native home.

508[*a*] *Ananus* was the priest who had barred the Idumaeans from Jerusalem in the previous winter (cf. 316); his death (319[*c*]) removed another stalwart leader from the government of Jerusalem, and it caused a new influx of revolutionary violence of every shade by Zealots, Sicarii, Simon's followers, homeless refugees, and others. Simon, however was not content to follow the lead of the other rebel groups and intended to organize a force of his own, strong enough to occupy the capital.

510[*b*] *A peasant army of the dispossessed* Josephus accepted the fact that land-hungry peasants would join rebel movements in their despair, and this was one of the roots of Zealot activity (which he qualified as "banditry"). But he found the rising of citizen recruits as revolutionaries an unforeseen development. He was wrong in his assumption. The country was adrift with thousands of urban and rural refugees from Galilee, Peraea and other districts in the wake of the Roman advance. S. Appelbaum, (*Eretz Israel,* XII, 128) suggests an interesting parallel between Simon bar Giora's recruiting of an army of dispossessed peasants and serfs in his native Acrabatene, with another series of episodes related by Josephus in *Antiq.* XX, 2, when the Jewish inhabitants of *Zia* in Peraea had fallen out with the gentiles of Philadelphia over peasants and land rights.) Another cause of discontent in the rural areas were the vast estates still controlled by Roman administrators. This was also one of the causes of revolutionary upheaval and reign of terror in Jerusalem against its moderate leadership; it spurred on Simon bar Giora to set up his own army.

511[*c*] *Greater Idumaea* or *Daroma,* as defined in Jewish sources, stretched as far as the Negev, beyond Beersheba, and eastward to the shores of the Dead Sea, an area not occupied by the Romans.

512[*a*] *Nain,* a village southeast of Hebron and a strategic site with good natural defenses.

512[*b*] *Valley of Pheretae* is the present gorge of *Wadi Fara* and *Fawar* 10 and 12 kms northeast of Jerusalem. Simon moved out of the wilderness into these well-watered canyons and established his headquarters there. The valleys served also as a link between the borderlands of Judea and the Jordan Valley. Simon's area of operations ranged then from Acrabatene on the southeastern borders of Samaria to the eastern and southern borders of Idumaea (cf. 511[*c*] and map, p. 293). In those days these borderlands were still settled, though sparsely.

512[*c*] *Loot and storage* The existence of storage centers was a common feature in various parts of the country since biblical times. B. Mazar has recently drawn attention to the fact that certain geographical localities, called *Migron,* had been named after their storage center and served the communal needs of one or several villages.

513[*d*] As explained in note 508[*a*] above.

514[*a*] *Designs* over their position in Jerusalem and its hinterland.

515[*b*] The term "country" in this context refers to the far-flung borders of the district south and east of Jerusalem and Hebron. The author does not explain Simon's motives in attacking the Idumaeans. Both of them had a common enemy in the moderate leadership of Jerusalem and in the Romans. They may have feared that his ultimate motive was to dominate the capital; moreover, many fugitives who had fled from there still remembered his ruthless raid on the city.

516[*c*] The "frontier" of the highland east of Bethlehem and Hebron; beyond lay the wilderness where Simon's army roamed in security.

517[*d*] *Nain* Cf. 512[*a*].

518[*a*] *Thekoue* = Tekoa, some 25 kms southeast of Bethlehem, an ancient town (and home of the prophet Amos), also fortified by King Jeroboam (II Chron. 11, 6). Simon may have fought his way there or found no opposition.

518[*b*] *Herodion* was situated 5 kms northeast of Tekoa. Simon invested the countryside of the Herodian stronghold (*War* I, 419f).

521[*a*] *James* = Jacob.

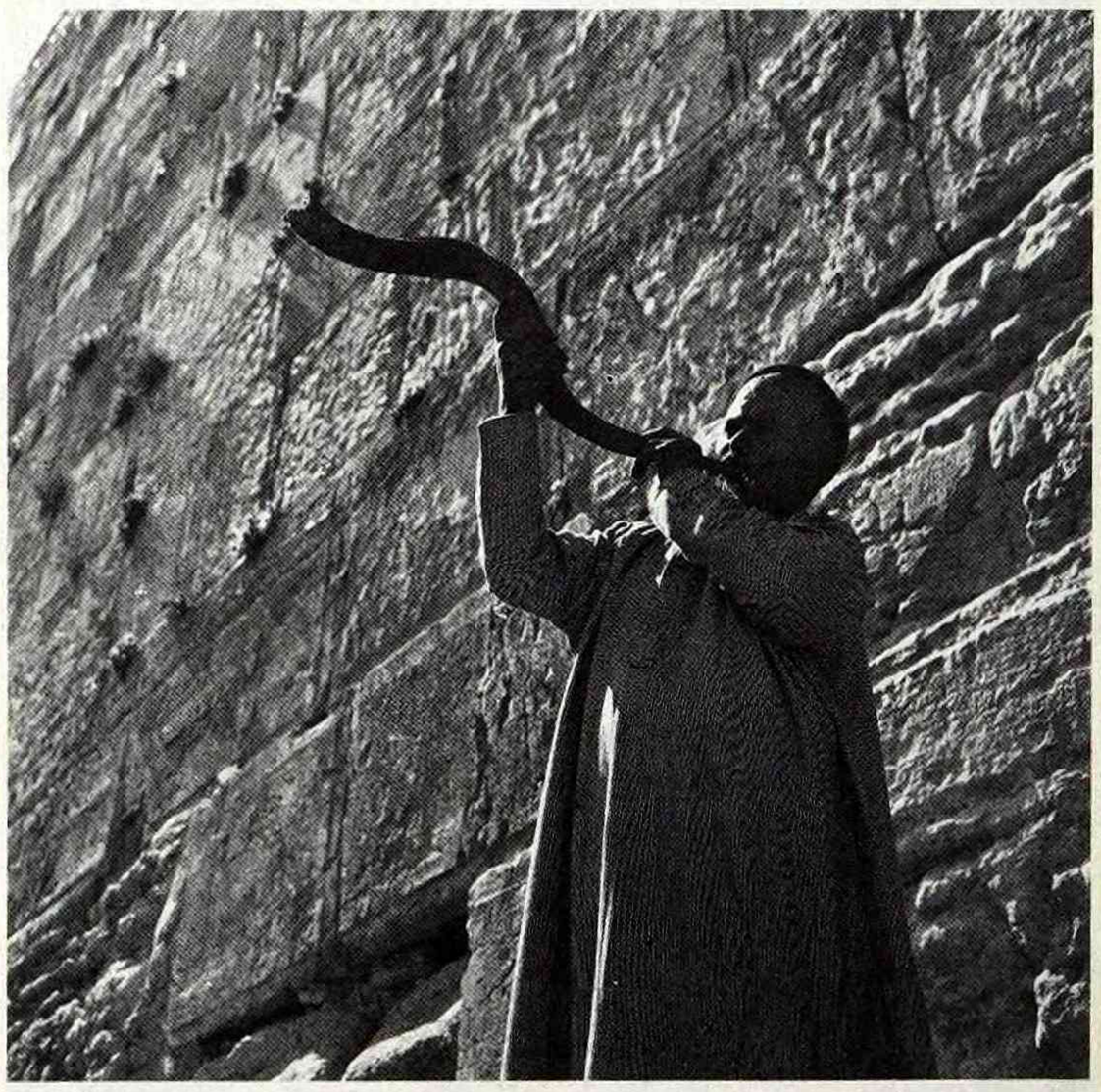
522[*b*] *Alurus,* the modern village of Halhul 6.6 kms north of Hebron and 11.6 southeast of Simon's camp at Tekoa.

manded, thus driving him into the hands of the brigands who had seized Masada [*d*]. (505) At first they eyed him warily, and only allowed him into the lower part of the stronghold with the women he brought with him, occupying the upper quarters themselves. (506) Later, as a man of congenial disposition and to all appearances trustworthy, he was allowed to join them on their marauding expeditions and raids upon the surrounding area. (507) He failed in his efforts to persuade them to attempt anything more ambitious; for they had grown accustomed to the stronghold and were afraid to venture far from their safe refuge. (508) But he, on the other hand, aimed at despotic power and cherished high ambitions. When he heard that Ananus [*a*] was dead, he withdrew to the hill country. There he proclaimed liberty for the slaves and rewards for the free, thus gathering around him the outcasts from every quarter.

4. A peasant army of volunteers organized by Simon to attack the Zealots

(509) As soon as he had collected a strong force, he overran the villages in the hill country; then the constant flow of recuits emboldened him to descend to the lowlands. (510) Soon after, when he had become an object of dread to the towns, many prominent men were led astray into joining him because of his strength and career of continual success. Now his army no longer consisted of mere serfs [*b*] or bandits, but included many citizen recruits, who obeyed him like a king. (511) He next overran not only the toparchy of Acrabatene but the whole area extending as far as greater Idumaea [*c*]. (512) Near a village called Nain [*a*] he had built a wall which he used as a

An Oriental Jew blowing the shofar *(ram's horn) at the foot of the Temple Mount*



fortress to secure his position. He also found many convenient caves in the valley of Pheretae [*b*]. He enlarged some and found others suitable for his purpose, using them as store chambers and repositories for loot [*c*]. (513) There too he laid up his stores of grain and accommodated most of his troops. His object was obvious: he was training his army in readiness for an attack on Jerusalem [*d*].

5. Simon's repulsion of an attack of the Zealots

(514) Alarmed at his designs [*a*] and desirous to forestall the man whose growing strength was to their disadvantage [*a*], the Zealots marched out in force under arms. Simon met them and, on joining battle, inflicted heavy casualties and drove the remainder into the city. (515) He was not yet so sure of himself as to assault the walls. He set out first to subdue Idumaea, and advanced towards the frontier of the country [*b*] at the head of twenty thousand armed men. (516) The Idumaean chieftains quickly mustered their best fighting men in the country, about twenty-five thousand of them, and leaving most of the population to guard their possessions against raids of the *Sicarii* of Masada, they met Simon at the frontier [*c*]. (517) He fought them there, but the engagement which lasted all day ended without victory to either side. He then withdrew to Nain [*d*], and the Idumaeans dispersed to their homes. (518) Not long after, Simon with a large force again invaded their territory, and encamped near a village called Thekoue [*a*]. From there he sent one of his aides named Eleazar to the garrison at Herodion [*b*], nearby, to persuade them to surrender the fort. (519) Eleazar was readily admitted by the guards, who did not realize what he had come for. But when he mentioned surrender they drew their swords and chased him until, unable to flee any further, he flung himself from the ramparts into the valley below and was instantly killed. (520) The Idumaeans were now thoroughly alarmed by Simon's strength and decided before joining battle to reconnoiter the enemy forces.

6. James the Idumaean's betrayal of his country to Simon

(521) For this duty, James [*a*], one of their officers, promptly offered his services, with the intention of turning traitor. (522) He set out from Alurus [*b*], the village where the Idumaean army was concentrated at the time, and went directly to Simon. (523) He made an agreement with him, first to deliver up his own native village in return for a solemn undertaking that he should always occupy a position of influence; he further undertook to help Simon subdue the whole of Idumaea. (524) He was thereupon lavishly entertained by Simon and, buoyed up by dazzling promises, returned to his own people. He began by immensely exaggerating the strength of the general's army. (525) Then he gave receptions to the officers and small parties to the rank and file and instigated them to receive Simon and hand over all authority to him without a struggle. (526) During these negotiations, he sent a message to Simon, inviting him to come and promising him to disperse the Idumaeans, as indeed he did. (527) As the army drew near, he was the first to leap to the saddle and flee, followed by his accomplices. (528) Panic seized the whole force, and, before a blow as far as greater Idumaea [*c*]. (512) Near a village called Nain [*a*] he had built a wall which he used as a

A huge stone (243 × 100 cms) was unearthed at the southern corner of the Temple Mount and was part of a balustrade at the top of the southern wall. It was inscribed in Hebrew: "To the place of the trumpeting" (cf: 582 [d])

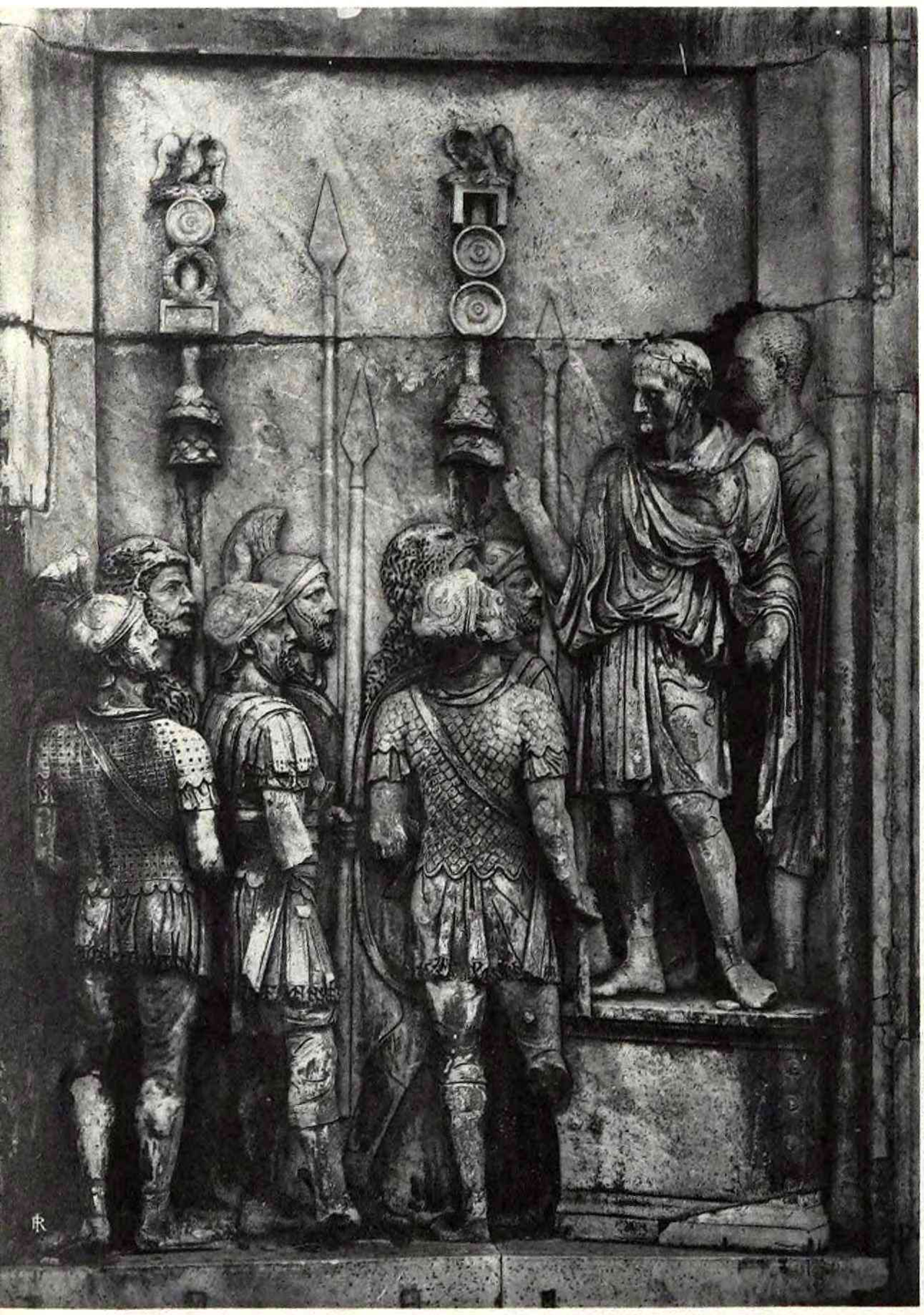
529[*a*] The "little town of Hebron," as defined had deteriorated considerably since biblical times. Once the first capital of King David, and fortified by King Rehoboam, it was resettled after the Exile (*Nehem.* 11, 25) and subsequently by Idumaeans. During the first years of the Hasmonean revival, it was captured and partly destroyed (I *Mac.* 5, 65) and has since remained part of Judaea (Hebron is known as *el-Khalil* in Arabic).

530[*b*] *More ancient* The remote antiquity of Hebron, as defined in the text, is not accurate. It is not older than the Egyptian Memphis. According to Numbers 13, 22, it was built seven years before Zoan = Tanis in Egypt, i.e. about 1720 BC and it was, in any case, not built "two thousand and three hundred years" before Josephus' time. At this point the author contradicts himself by saying that it is older than Memphis. In *Antiq.* he corrects this by quoting the date given in Scriptures, Num. 13, 32.

531[*c*] Another surprising feature of this description is its attribution to the tradition of the inhabitants (and not to Scriptures, which could serve as a safer source).

532[*d*] Jewish and Arab traditions identify the Tomb of the Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) with the standing cenotaphs in the *Cave of Machpela* situated in the great historic mosque of Hebron. Nevertheless, it is certain that the beautiful wall which surrounds the Cave of Machpela, and the mosque date to the time of Herod. The area enclosed measures 54 × 30 m. This Herodian wall is decorated on the outside with tall flat pilasters. But the other structures above the Cave (which was never surveyed) and the hallowed cenotaphs incorporate remains of

Roman legionaries and their standards arraigned before their emperor (Marcus Aurelius) in an attitude reminiscent of Vespasian's acclamation (IV, 603-604)



7. Simon's capture of Hebron; its antiquities

(529) Having in this unexpected way marched into Idumaea without bloodshed, Simon captured the little town of Hebron [*a*] by a surprise attack, where he seized a large quantity of booty and laid hands on huge supplies of grain. (530) According to the statements of the inhabitants, Hebron is more ancient [*b*] than any town in the country—even older than Memphis in Egypt; it is reckoned as two thousand [*b*] and three hundred years old. (531) They further relate [*c*] that it was the home of Abraham, the forefather of the Jews, after his migration from Mesopotamia, and that his descendants went down into Egypt from there [*c*]. (532) Their tombs [*d*] are shown in this little town to this day, made of the finest marble [*d*] and beautifully fashioned. (533) At a distance of six furlongs [*a*] from the town there grows an immense terebinth [*a*], said to have stood there since creation. (534) From Hebron Simon advanced through the whole of Idumaea, not only sacking villages and towns but also ravaging the countryside, since provisions proved insufficient for such a host. For in addition to his troops, he had forty thousand followers. (535) Moreover, his brutal nature and hatred of the people were major reasons for the devastation of their land. (536) Just as in the wake of locusts a whole forest may be seen stripped bare, so in the rear of Simon's army nothing was left but desolation. (537) Some places they burnt, some they razed to the ground. All vegetation vanished throughout the country, either trodden underfoot or devoured, and by marching across they made cultivated land harder then barren soil. In short, not a trace remained to show that what they destroyed had ever existed [*b*].

8. Simon's wife taken prisoner and released

(538) All this roused the Zealots to renewed activity. Though afraid to meet Simon in open battle, they laid ambushes in the passes and captured his wife and many of her servants. (539) Then, as delighted as if they had taken Simon himself prisoner, they returned to the city, expecting that he would at once lay down his arms and plead for the return of his wife. (540) Her capture, however, moved him not to tender feelings, but to fury. He advanced to the walls of Jerusalem, and like a wounded beast when it failed to catch its hunter, he vented his rage upon everyone he met. (541) All who went outside the gates to gather herbs or firewood, unarmed and aged individuals, he seized and tortured to death; in his boundless rage he was ready to gnaw their dead bodies [*c*]. (542) He sent many of them back after cutting off their hands [*d*], with the twofold object of intimidating his host and stirring the people to revolt against the responsible parties. (543) They were ordered to say that Simon swore to God, who oversees all, that if they did not instantly restore his wife to him, he would demolish the wall and inflict similar punishment on every soul in the city, sparing neither young nor old and treating guilty

and innocent alike. (544) These threats terrified not only the citizens but the Zealots too, and they sent his wife back to him. Pacified for the time being, he took a brief respite from ceaseless bloodshed [*e*].

9. The sequel of civil war in Italy

(545) It was not only in Judaea that sedition and civil war were rife, but in Italy too [*a*]. (546) Galba had been assassinated in the middle of the Roman forum [*b*] and his successor Otho being proclaimed Emperor, was at war with Vitellius who claimed the throne, declaring that he had been nominated by the legions in Germany. (547) In the battle fought at Bedriacum [*c*] in Gaul, battle was joined against Valens and Caecinna, Vitellius' generals. On the first day Otho had the advantage, on the second the troops of Vitellius. (548) So frightful was the carnage that Otho killed himself at Brixellum, when he learned of his defeat, after a reign of only three months and two days [*c*]. (549) His army went over to Vitellius' generals, who now marched upon Rome himself, with his entire force.

Vespasian's resumption of his campaign

(550) Meanwhile, Vespasian left Caesarea on the fifth of the month of Daesius [*a*] and launched a campaign against those districts of Judaea that had not yet submitted. (551) Climbing into the hill country, he occupied two toparchies, those which take their name from Gophna and Acrabetta [*b*]; then he captured two small towns, Bethela and Ephraim [*c*]. After garrisoning these, he rode with his cavalry up to the walls of Jerusalem, slaughtering many of those he met on the way and taking numerous prisoners. (552) Moreover,

later periods. The more ancient remains lie underground.

533[*a*] 6 furlongs = 1.2 kms. The ancient terebinth tree or "oak of Abraham" (Gen. 13, 8 and 18, 1) may refer to the ancient site situated a short distance north of Hebron (Ramet-el-Khalil). Herod surrounded the sanctuary with a beautifully built wall and pilasters that enclosed an area of 150 × 200 ft.

537[*b*] *Ever existed* Though Josephus describes Hebron as a modest town, its countryside was fertile and provided ample provisions to feed Simon's large peasant army. Despite his violence, it is surprising that the native Idumaeans did not later resent Simon's past deeds and fought under him during the siege of Jerusalem (*War* V, 249).

541[*c*] *Dead bodies* Josephus uses a similar hyperbole in VI, 373. The romantic tale of rage is true to his style and eloquent narrative.

542[*d*] *Hands* It was customary to chop off the fingers of men to disable them for military service. Many Arabs were known to thus mutilate themselves in order to avoid military service in Turkish times.

544[*e*] At the same time, the tale reveals the worries of the Zealots within Jerusalem about this dangerous foe. The narrative of war in Judaea is resumed in para. 556.

545[*a*] The incidence of revolution and civil war, both in Judaea and Rome, was not accidental. Apparently the Jews were aware of Rome's weakness at the turn of AD 68, and their strategy may not have been altogether unsound; *but they erred in their timing* and, furthermore, could not foresee that Vespasian, despite his procrastination, would rise to supreme power and end the civil war in Italy after the "Year of the four emperors."

546[*b*] Cf. 494[*d*].

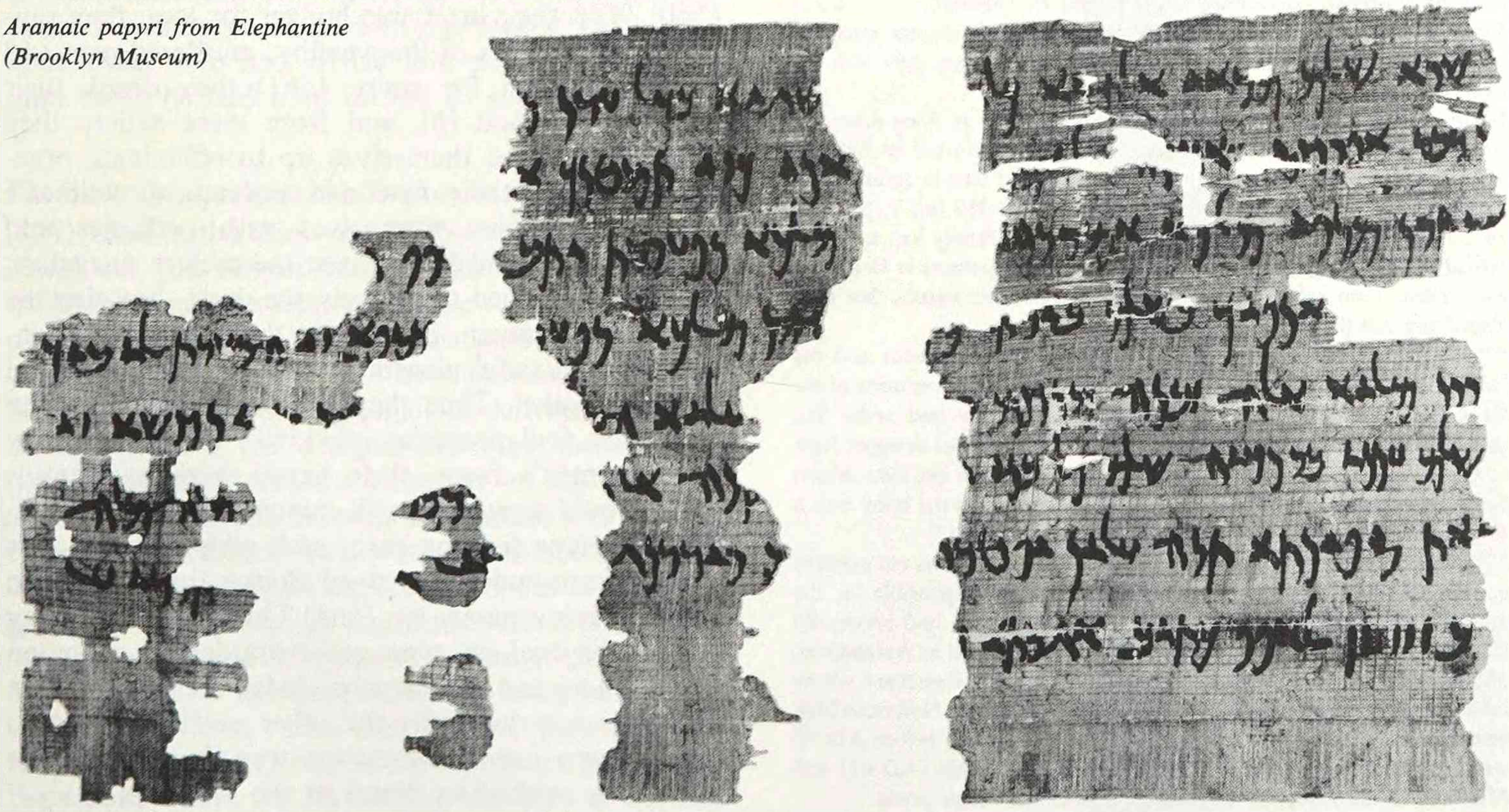
547[*c*], 548[*c*]. Cf. 495[*d*].

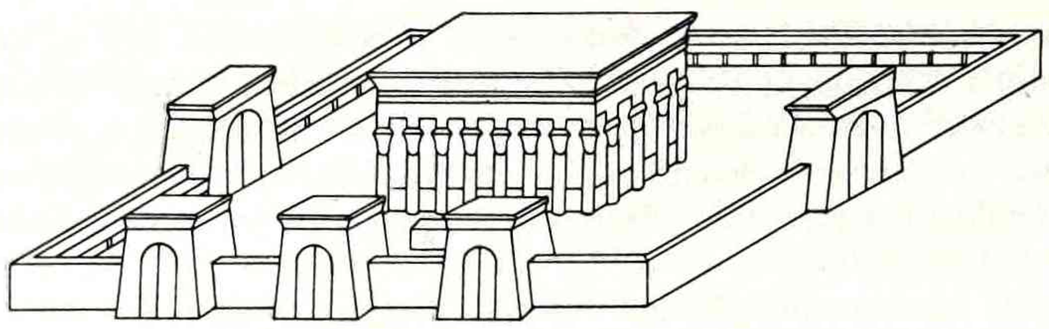
550[*a*] *Daesius* = Approx. June 15, 69. Vespasian spent the second year of his stay in Palestine at Caesarea. Before he received news of Vitellius' rise to the throne (cf. 549), he decided to proceed with the Judaean campaign, apparently aware that any procrastination on his part might be construed in Rome as harboring designs on the throne.

551[*b*] *Gophna,* some 20 kms north of Jerusalem, the district where the early Hasmoneans entrenched themselves during the revolt against the Syrians (*War* I, 45). Acrabetta (Acrabatene), the town and toparchy south of Samaria.

551[*c*] *Bethela,* modern *Beitin,* a few miles southeast of Gophna; Ephraim or "Ophra" (with a guttural "o") is near el Taybeh northeast of Bethel; both towns were situated in the region known since Hasmonean and Herodian times as the "King's Mountain," whose estates were mostly owned by the Jewish monarchs.

Aramaic papyri from Elephantine (Brooklyn Museum)





Reconstruction of the Jewish temple at Yahu in Elephantine, according to von Hoonecker

552[*d*] *Caphetra* is Kfar-tov (Khirbet 'Atraba) and *Capharbis*, north of it, were small towns in the low hills west of Hebron.

554[*a*] Cf. 530[*b*].

555[*b*] The topography of this phase shows that the last territory still held by the Jews was the area south and east of Jerusalem, including the strongholds of Herodion and Masada, as well as the area around Machaerus, east of the Dead Sea.

556[*a*] Resuming the narrative from para. 544.

561[*b*] Compare this vivid description with *War* VI, 358 ff.

562[*c*] *Loose morals in Jerusalem* The pollution of the city at the time is compared to the prevalence of vice, perversions, and the like in the gentile millieu in the East or in Rome, a condition not experienced before in the puritanical holy city. The loose morals attributed to John's men smacks of exaggeration—where the acts of a few were applied to the whole. It is interesting to note, however, that rape was not blamed only on these "brigands" as the author calls them, but that adultery also prevailed to such an extent that a new *halakha* (regulation) was recommended by Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai to abolish the ancient custom of the "water of bitterness" observed at the Temple, namely on the steps leading from the Women's Court to the beautiful Nikanor Gate. This was notorious as the place where women suspected of adultery were tested. According to ancient law (Num. 5, 18–28), such a woman was given the "water of bitterness" to drink—a potion mixed with cereal offering, over which was pronounced a traditional curse. If she were guilty, "the water that brings the curse shall enter into her... and the woman shall become an execration among her people." In addition, the judges could wear down the woman's opposition to admitting guilt by making her go up and down the steps to the gate (*Mishna Sota* 9). An echo of such a scene is found in John 7, 53–58, 11 where the Pharisees brought to Jesus a woman condemned to be stoned for adultery.

566[*a*] The Idumaeans may have stayed on in Jerusalem after the main body withdrew (cf. 535). It is not known why they split with the Zealots.

567[*b*] *Grapte* was a member of the royal family of King Izates of Adiabene in northern Mesopotamia, which had converted to Judaism around AD 40. (The story of their conversion and stay in Jerusalem is told in *Antiq.* XX 17–37, 75–80; *War* II, 520, IV, 360 [*a*], V, 55, 119, 147, 252.) Several members of the Adiabene royal family had settled in Jerusalem, including *Grapte*, after whom one of the palaces in Jerusalem was called, John established his headquarters in her palace. See map identifying Adiabene.

571[*c*]–572[*c*] The strange alliance between the Idumaeans and the chief priests is hard to understand. It is known that the governance of the Great Sanhedrin had lapsed since AD 68, and law and order had become very problematic in the capital. Though Josephus detested John of Gischala, his old enemy, he regarded him as a lesser evil than Simon ben Giora. Hence, the switch over of the moderates to the latter was a serious blunder, when "God perverted their judgement."

573[*c*] The crisis had brought about a political change as old enemies got together. The chief or high priests, who were responsible for the maintenance of religious rule and order in the capital, had previously fought Simon and his gangs tooth and nail in his retreat at Acrabatene, and forced him to seek refuge in Masada, among the Idumaeans whose land he had devastated; now both joined the high priests. Notorious high priests who are known to have lived in the last decade before AD 70 were Joseph ben Kimchit (AD 61), Joshua ben Damāi (AD 62) and Matthias of the House of Boethus, the incumbent high priest.

Cerealius, one of his officers, took a detachment of cavalry and infantry, laid waste what is known as Upper Idumaea, taking at the first assault the small town of Caphethra [*d*] which he set on fire, (553) and then attacked and proceeded to besiege another town called Capharabis [*d*]. However, the wall was exceedingly strong, and he was resigning himself to a long siege, when the inhabitants suddenly opened the gates and, coming forward with olive-branches in their hands, surrendered. (554) Cerealius, after accepting their surrender, advanced on Hebron, another very ancient city, situated, as I have said [*a*], in the hill country, not far from Jerusalem. Forcing an entry, he slaughtered all whom he found there, young and old alike, and razed the city to the ground. (555) Every fortress had now been reduced but Herodion, Masada, and Machaerus [*b*], which were held by the brigands [*b*]. The target of the Romans was now Jerusalem itself.

10. Simon's attack on Jerusalem; the citizens at the mercy of drunken and murderous Zealots

(556) After Simon [*a*] had recovered his wife from the Zealots, he returned once more to what remained of Idumaea, and, harrying the nation from every direction, he forced multitudes to flee to Jerusalem. (557) He followed them to the city himself, and, again encircling the wall, he killed all the working men whom he caught trying to escape to the countryside. (558) The people found Simon outside the walls a greater tertor than the Romans, and the Zealots within Jerusalem more oppressive than either; (559) of these the Galilean contingent was pre-eminent in their mischievous ingenuity and audacity. It was they who had promoted John to power, and he, from the position of authority on which they had set him, rewarded them by leaving every man free to do as he liked. (560) With their insatiable hunger for loot, they ransacked the houses of the wealthy, murdered men and violated women for sport; (561) they drank their spoils with blood [*b*], and from mere satiety they shamelessly gave themselves up to effeminate practices, plaiting their hair and putting on women's clothes, drenching themselves with perfumes and painting their eyelids to make themselves attractive. (562) They copied not merely the dress, but also the passions of women, devising in their excess of licentiousness unlawful pleasures in which they wallowed as in a brothel. Thus they entirely polluted the city with their foul practices [*c*]. (563) Yet though they wore women's faces, their hands were murderous. They would approach with mincing steps, then suddenly became fighting men, and, whipping out their swords from under their dyed cloaks, they would run through every passer-by. (564) Those who ran away from John had an even more murderous reception from Simon, and anyone who eluded the tyrant within the walls was killed by the other outside the gates. (565) Every avenue of escape was thus cut off for those who wished to desert to the Romans.

11. Sedition in the ranks of the Zealots

(566) But John's forces now mutinied and all the Idumaeans [*a*] within the city broke away and attacked the tyrant, out of envy of his power as well as hatred of his cruelty. (567) In the ensuing engagement they wiped out many of the Zealots and drove the rest into the palace built by Grapte [*b*], a relative of Izas [*b*], king of Adiabene. (568) The Idumaeans poured in with them, and drove them from there into the Temple. They then set about looting John's treasures. (569) He lived in this palace and stored there spoils of his tyranny. (570) Meanwhile the rank and file of the Zealots, scattered all over the city, joined forces with the fugitives in the Temple, and John prepared to lead them against the citizens and Idumaeans. (571) The latter [*c*], being better soldiers, feared their attack less than their frenzy, lest they should steal out of the Temple by night, murder their opponents and burn the city to the ground. (572) Accordingly, they held a joint meeting with the chief priests [*c*] to discuss the best means of guarding against their onslaught. (573) But God, as events proved, perverted their judgment [*c*], and to save their lives they chose a remedy more disastrous than death; namely, in order to overthrow John they voted to admit Simon, and with suppliant appeals [*d*] to introduce a second tyrant to be their master. (574) The resolution was carried out, and they sent high priest Matthias [*a*] to implore Simon to enter—the man whom they had held in such horror! The invitation was supported by the natives of Jerusalem who were trying to escape the Zealots and longed for their homes and property. (575) Simon disdainfully consented to be their master, and entered as one who wanted to rid the city of the Zealots, acclaimed by the people as their deliverer and protector; (576) but when he and his forces were inside, his sole concern was to secure his own supremacy, and looked upon those who had invited him as enemies no less than those he had been invited to suppress.

12. Simon's attack on the Zealots in the Temple area

(577) Thus in the third year of the war, in the month Xanthicus [*a*], Simon became master of Jerusalem; while John and the Zealots, unable to leave the Temple [*b*], and having lost all their possessions in the city—for their property had been instantly looted by Simon's men—began to despair of deliverance. (578) Simon attacked the Temple, aided by the citizens; their adversaries posted themselves on the porticoes and battlements and beat off their attacks. (579) The casualties in Simon's ranks were numerous, both in dead and wounded, for the Zealots from their higher ground [*c*] easily kept up a well-aimed fire. (580) Having the advantage of position already, they further constructed four enormous towers in order to increase the elevation from which they directed their fire with telling effect—(581) one at the northeast corner [*a*], the second above the Xystus [*b*], the third at another

573[*d*] *"Suppliant appeals"*—namely with an olive branch in hand.

574[*a*] Matthias, belonging to the high-priestly family of Boethus (cf. *War* IV, 148) was later murdered with his family by Simon (*War* IV, 527 ff.). A concise description of the priestly oligarchy, particularly with regard to their established rights and harsh rule over the Temple and the people, is found in Talmudic tradition. It is transmitted in the name of two sages who lived at the time of the destruction of the Temple, Abba Saul ben Bothnith and Aba Jose ben Johanan: "Woe is me because of the House of Boethus; woe is me because of their staves! Woe is me because of the House of Katros; woe is me because of their pens! Woe is me because of the House of Elhanan; woe is me because of their whisperings!; Woe is me because of the House of Ishmael ben Phiabi; woe is me because of their fists! For they are high priests, and their sons are (Temple) treasurers, and their sons-in-law are trustees, and their servants beat the people with sticks."

577[*a*] Xanthicus = April, 69, namely a month before Vespasian set out to conquer the north of Judaea and after the Zealots and John of Gischala had held Jerusalem for more than a year.

577[*b*] *Leave the Temple* They were confined to the inner, well-fortified compound and walled Temple area.

579[*c*] The high ground held by the Zealots was the slopes of the Western Hill of Jerusalem which faced the whole length of the vast Temple esplanade. (See map in Book V, p. 319.)

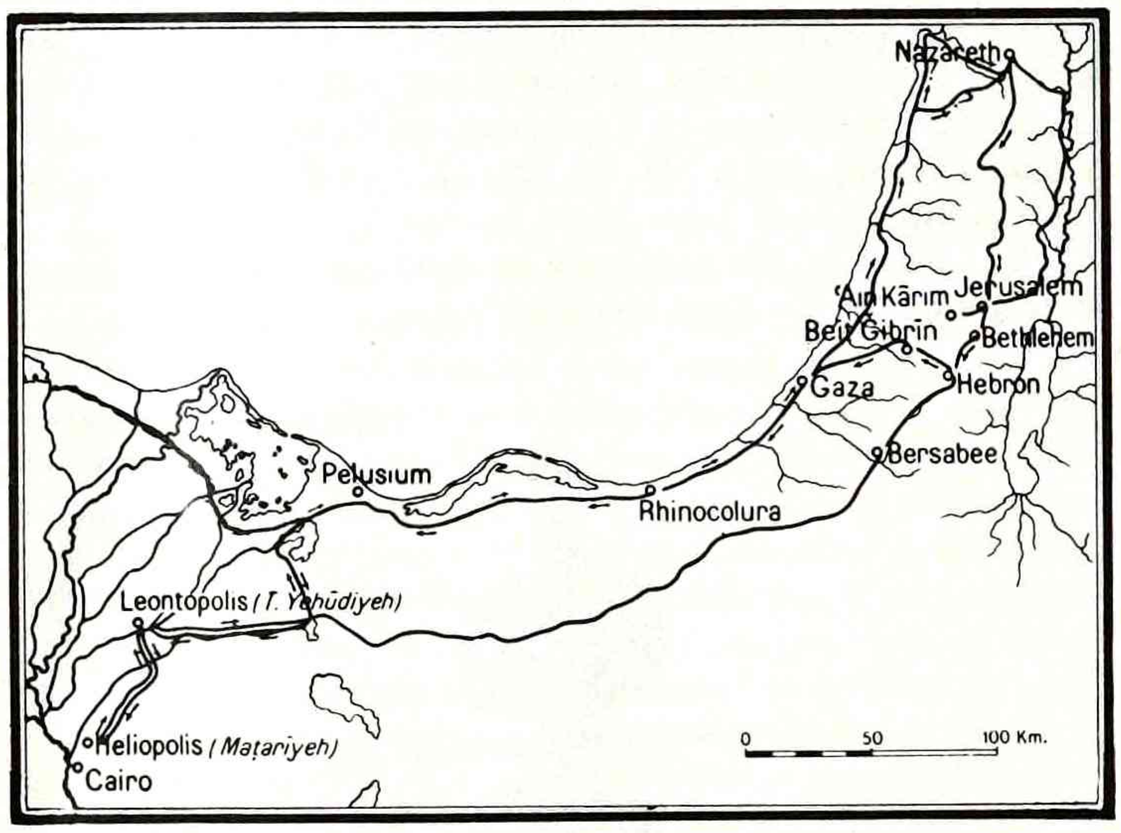
581[*a*] The northeastern corner of the vast Temple esplanade.

581[*b*] The *Xystus* compound was situated on the Tyropoeon Road facing the high Western Wall. The higher part of the Xystus was linked with the Temple esplanade by a causeway. John's tower was built over its eastern end (cf. *War* I, 143; VI, 191, 337, 324 ff.). This structure is probably referred to in Talm. *Yoma* 25, 71.

581[*c*] *Lower City* The third tower apparently stood over a section of the southern wall that faced the Lower City.

The standards of the Roman legions led them in their inexorable marches

582[*d*] *The Place of Trumpeting* The excavations led by B. Mazar at the foot of the Temple Mount have helped to identify the position and remains of the fourth tower, placed, as stated, over the outer Temple court (at the periphery of the courts): "This was a trimmed stone block found near the southwestern corner with a monumental Hebrew inscription which was carved at the edge of a niche. It reads as follows: L'BEIT HATIQI'Ā LEHĀKH[RĪZ]—the first two words meaning "To the Place of Trumpeting" and the third "Lehākhrīz" meaning to proclaim or to herald. It stood at the edge of the outer Temple court chambers. On the eve of the Sabbath one of the priests would ascend this place and sound a trumpet to signal the advent of the holy day, and at sundown the procees was repeated to announce its conclusion. It is evident, therefore, that the niche in which the priest stood, at the pinnacle, had to be located very close to the southwestern corner of the wall; furthermore, it would have been entirely logical to call it the Place of Trumpeting. It will be observed that the strategic point overlooked most of the city's quarters, as well as the streets, residences and bazaars" (B. Mazar, *The Mountain of the Lord*, p. 138). See pictures under par. 512 and 528.
This custom is also mentioned in Babyl. Talm. *Shabbath* 35 [*b*] and in Jerus Talm. *Shabbath* XVII, 16 [*a*].
583[*a*] *Catapults* are arrow throwing engines. *Ballistae*, stone-throwing machines. They are described and illustrated in Book III.
585[*b*] Resuming the narrative from 549.



The march of Titus in AD 69/70 from Alexandria to Caesarea across the Egyptian Delta and along the coast determined a radical change in the Roman road system to facilitate subsequent movements of Roman troops between the main centers of Roman power in the Orient, namely Alexandria and Antioch, via Ptolemais (Acre, west of Nazareth) as early as Nero's time

A Roman bireme transporting troops (Vatican Museum)

corner opposite the Lower City [*c*]. (582) The last was erected over the roofs of the priests' chambers [*d*], where it was the custom for one of the priests to stand in the afternoon and proclaim by trumpet the approach of every seventh day, and on the following evening its close, announcing to the people the respective hour to cease work and to resume it [*d*]. (583) Upon these towers they mounted catapults [*a*] and ballistae [*a*], along with archers and slingers. (584) Simon's attacks now grew more hesitant as most of the men lost heart. All the same, he held his ground, having the advantage of numbers, though the missiles from the engines with their longer range killed many of the men engaged.

Chapter X

1. Vitellius' transformation of Rome into an armed camp

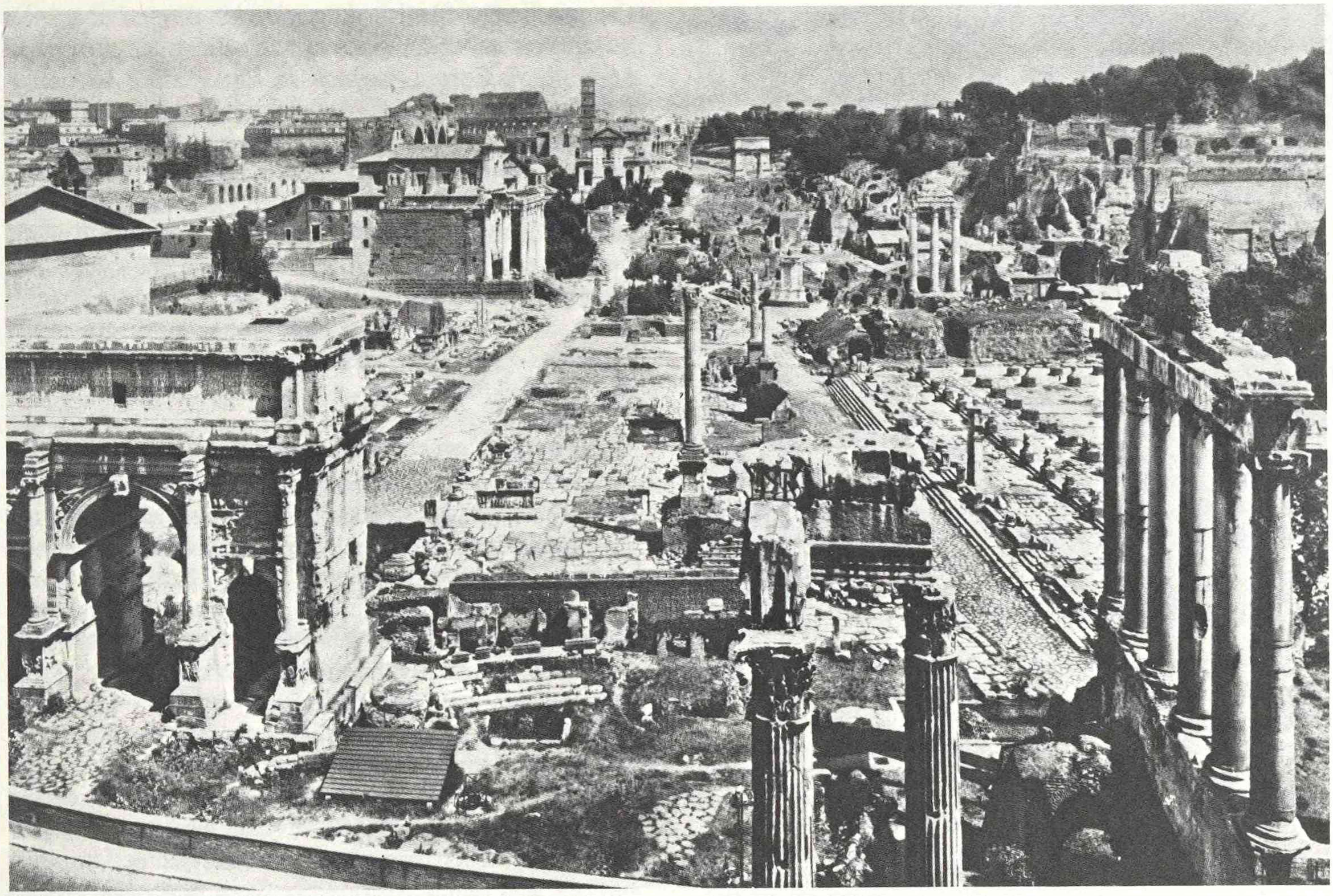
(585) While this was happening [*a*], Rome itself was beset by severe heavy shocks [*b*]. (586) Vitellius had arrived from Germany, dragging along with his army a vast, motley crowd [*c*]; and as the quarters provided for the soldiers were inadequate, he turned the whole of Rome into a camp and filled every house with armed men. (587) These were unused to the sight of Roman wealth and the silver and gold that glittered all around them, and they could hardly restrain their avarice, but turned to plunder right and left, slaughtering any who got in their way. Such was the state of affairs in Italy [*c*].

2. Vespasian's exasperation at the news of Vitellius' accession

(588) Vespasian [*a*], after subjugating all the neighborhood of Jerusalem, went back to Caesarea, where he heard of the upheavals in Rome and the accession of Vitellius to the throne. (589) Though he knew very well how to obey as well as how to command, the news roused his indignation: he scorned him as master one who made a mockery of the empire, as though it were forsaken; (590) and in his distress over this calamity, when his own country was being ravaged, he could not bear to devote his attention to wars elsewhere. (591) But, much as his anger drove him to its defense, the thought of the distance restrained him: since fortune might forestall him by many fortuitous events before he could cross to Italy, especially since he would have to sail in the winter season [*b*]. This thought curbed his fury which was fast getting out of control.

3. His indignant soldiers' decision to take over

(592) His officers and men, however, in informal gatherings, were already talking of revolution: "These soldiers in Rome," they exclaimed indignantly, "living in luxury, and unwilling even to hear a rumor of war, elect anyone they fancy to the sovereignty and create emperors in hope of riches; (593) whereas we, who



The Forum Romanum (looking eastward). At the left, in the foreground, is the triumphal Arch of Septimius Severus. In the distance, at the other end of the Forum, is the triumphal Arch of Titus featuring the bas-reliefs of the sacramental objects recovered from the Temple of Jerusalem (cf. VIII, 150)

have borne so much toil and sweat are grown gray in service beneath our helmets, let others enjoy this privilege, when we actually have among ourselves a more worthy candidate. (594) What more appropriate way can we find of repaying his kindness to us, if we throw this chance away? Vespasian's claim to the throne is as far stronger than Vitellius', just as we are far better soldiers than those who elected that emperor; (595) for surely the wars we have waged were no less arduous than those of the legions in Germany, and we are not inferior as soldiers to the troops who brought that tyrant back with them. (596) Besides, no contest will be neccessary, for neither Senate nor people would tolerate Vitellius' lewdness rather than Vespasian's moderation. Nor would they prefer a most brutal tyrant in favor of a clean-living leader, or a childless prince to a father. For the best guarantee of peace lies in the legitimate succession of rulers. (597) If, then, it takes the experience of years to make a good sovereign, we have Vespasian; if it demands the vigor of youth, we have Titus; the advantages of both ages will be combined. (598) And we shall not be alone in supplying strength to those we appoint, as we can also muster three legions [*a*] and

586[*c*]–587[*c*] "Vitellius entered Rome like a conqueror... The conditions under which the troops lived in the city completed the process of demoralization which had begun during the advance. They were quartered all over Rome in temples and porticoes, subject to no kind of discipline. Many Germans and Gauls died of a disease contracted in the low-lying region of the Vatican during the hot Italian summer" (CAH, X, p. 826). Furthermore, Vitellius' personal character earned for him nothing but contempt and it cost the state 700 million sesterces during his short reign. Though he declared himself unable to find the money necessary for important purposes, he feasted in Rome, attending games and gladiatorial shows, allowing his army to lose its efficiency. (Tacitus, *Hist.* II, 89 f.; Suetonius, *Vitellius* 11 f.).

588[*a*] *Vespasian* Resuming the narrative from 555. But a chronological conundrum arises at this point. As Vitellius was raised to the throne around mid-April 69, it seems strange that Vespasian would not hear about it late in June when he returned to Caesarea after a short campaign.

591[*b*] *Winter season* Furthermore, what difficulties would he encounter if he sailed to Italy in mid-summer, as stated in the text. Finally, *Tacitus* in Hist. II, 79 relates that Tiberius Alexander and the legions in Egypt had proclaimed Vespasian emperor early in July in Alexandria (cf. *War* IV, 617).

598[*a*] The V, X and XV legions. Cf. *War* III, 65.

598[*b*] *Flavius Sabinus,* who had campaigned with Vespasian in Britain and governed Moesia (parts of present Yugoslavia and Bulgaria) for seven years, and now held the very important post of the urban prefect or mayor of Rome.

598[*c*] *Another son* Domitian, the future emperor.

600[*a*] *In his service* Meaning: after helping him guard the empire, have passed him over.

605[*a*] *Licinus Mucianus,* legate to Syria after the defeat of Cestius Gallus by the Jews, which led to his disgrace (*War* IV, 32, 495). Mucianus, who had literary and scientific interests, was powerful enough to rise to the throne, but he preferred to be Vespasian's right-hand man. Shortly, he would be sent to Italy to secure the empire for him (*War* IV, 632, 654).

605[*b*] Alexandria supplied a sufficient amount of wheat to feed Rome for four months of the year (cf. *War* II, 386).

606[*c*] The III and XXII legions; cf. *War* II, 387.

607[*a*] Cf. *War* II, 385 ff.

608[*b*] *Syene,* modern Aswan on the southern Nile.

608[*c*] *Coptus* Koft, the area on the eastern bank of the Nile, north of Karnak; it is mentioned perhaps as the place where the Nile most nearly approaches the coast of the Red Sea. In fact, the Red Sea penetrates considerably further north than Coptus.

609[*d*] *Egyptian Sea,* namely the southeastern end of the Mediterranean facing the Egyptian Delta.

610[*e*] *Pelusium* the Egyptian border town situated near what was once the easternmost (and now dry) mouth of the Nile; bordering on Sinai (*War* I, 175, 187 f., cf. 660 f.).

610[*f*] Two thousand furlongs given as the distance from Pelusium to Aswan (382 kms.) is a wholly inadequate figure; it is far greater, namely, 1116 kms.

610[*g*] *Plinthine,* a site on the Libyan frontier of Egypt, and on the coast west of Alexandria. The distance given is ca. 737 kms while this figure is nearly double the actual distance along the northern coast of Egypt (namely 355 kms). Strabo in his *Geography,* 791, reckoned the distance from Pelusium to Alexandria at 252 kms.

611[*h*] *Elephantine; its Jewish military colony and customs* Josephus was unaware of the fact that a Jewish frontier force had been stationed at Elephantine (called *Yeb*) on an island in the Nile opposite Syene (Assuan), below the First Cataract, in the years of Persian domination over Egypt. This was revealed by a chance discovery of hoards of papyri uncovered by Egyptian peasants who were digging the soil at Yeb for manure. The papyri said that their temple had been destroyed by Egyptian priests, and they begged the governor to help them restore their sanctuary. It is evident from one of the papyri that the people of Yeb had also appealed in this matter to the priests of Jerusalem and to Sanballat, the governor of Samaria. It is understood from another papyrus that Bagohi prevailed upon the governor of Egypt to allow the Jews of Yeb to rebuild the temple. The papyri reflect the favorable attitude of Persian rule and its official recognition of the temple, where the cult was subject to recognition by the Persian peḥa and the Great King himself. The observance of Passover was equally regulated through a Persian officer, Ashram. It is interesting to note that their system of sacrifices was maintained without realizing that the Deuteronomic law forbidding sacrifice outside Jerusalem (under Josiah's reform, II Kings 23, 3–24) was being violated. (And, indeed, this privilege was denied them after they rebuilt their temple.) The religious life of the Jews of Elephantine is a unique illustration of this phenomenon of the religion of Israel as it was observed in biblical times. Of particular interest are the marriage contracts which grant the women the right of divorce and other privileges that were unknown for women in the Old Testament.

612[*a*]–613[*a*] *Alexandria, "the Great Harbor"* The Island of Pharos was connected with the mainland by means of a mole 1200 yards long, and in this way an excellent double harbor was formed. In the other harbor warships of the Ptolemies had been stationed.

613[*b*] *Tower* On the coast of the island of Pharos was the world-famous lighthouse, one of the "Seven Wonders of the World," built in 297 BC.

613[*c*] Namely 58 kms.

615[*d*] Namely 5.8 kms. The Great Harbor was apparently half as long, yet it constituted the greatest commercial port in the eastern Mediterranean.

616[*a*] *Tiberius Julius Alexander,* a renegade Jew, once a procurator in Judaea. He would also become chief of staff in the siege of Jerusalem (cf. *War* II, 220, 309, 492 ff. 497; V, 45 ff.).

the auxiliaries furnished by the kings; and they will have the further support of the whole eastern world and all of Europe—which is too remote to be intimidated by Vitellius—and by the allies in Italy, Vespasian's brother [*b*] and another son [*c*]. (599) Of these, one will recruit many of the young men of rank, while the other has already been entrusted with the control of the city—an immense asset for any designs upon the empire. (600) In short, we may lose our chance through delay on our part, as the Senate will likely appoint the very man who is disgracefully neglected by his own soldiers who have grown gray in his service" [*a*].

4. Vespasian proclaimed emperor by the legions

(601) Such were the opinions current in military circles. Then, joining forces and urging each other on, they proclaimed Vespasian emperor and called on him to save the tottering empire. (602) Their general had long been anxious about the public welfare, but had never sought office for himself, for though aware that his career would justify such a claim, he preferred the safety of private life to the dangers of exalted position. (603) But the more he declined, the more insistent his officers became, and the soldiers surrounded him, sword in hand, and threatened to kill him if he refused to rule as he was entitle. (604) After earnestly impressing on them his many reasons for rejecting imperial honors, and failing to convince them, he finally yielded to their call.

5. Egypt secured by Vespasian

(605) He was now pressed by Mucianus [*a*] and other generals to assume the sovereignty, while the rest of the army demanded that he should lead them against whoever opposed him. But first he aimed to secure control of Alexandria. He realized the supreme importance of Egypt as the empire's supplier of wheat [*b*]. (606) Once master of Egypt he expected, even if hostilities dragged on, to be able to force Vitellius to surrender, as the people of Rome would never tolerate hunger. He also wished to add the two legions at Alexandria to his forces [*c*]; (607) and he planned to make the country his bulwark against the unpredictable tricks of fortune. For Egypt [*a*] is difficult to enter by land and its coast is almost harborless; (608) on the west it is protected by the arid deserts of Libya, on the south by the frontier dividing it from Ethiopia—Syene [*b*] and the unnavigable cataracts of the Nile: on the east by the Red Sea, which extends as far north as Coptus [*c*]; (609) while its northern bulwarks are the districts adjoining Syria and the so-called Egyptian Sea [*d*], where there is no anchorage at all. (610) Thus Egypt is walled off on every side. Its distance from Pelusium [*e*] to Syene [*e*] is two thousand furlongs [*f*], the passage from Plinthine [*g*] to Pelusium is three thousand six hundred furlongs. (611) The Nile can be navigated as far as the city called Elephantine [*h*], beyond which further progress is barred by the

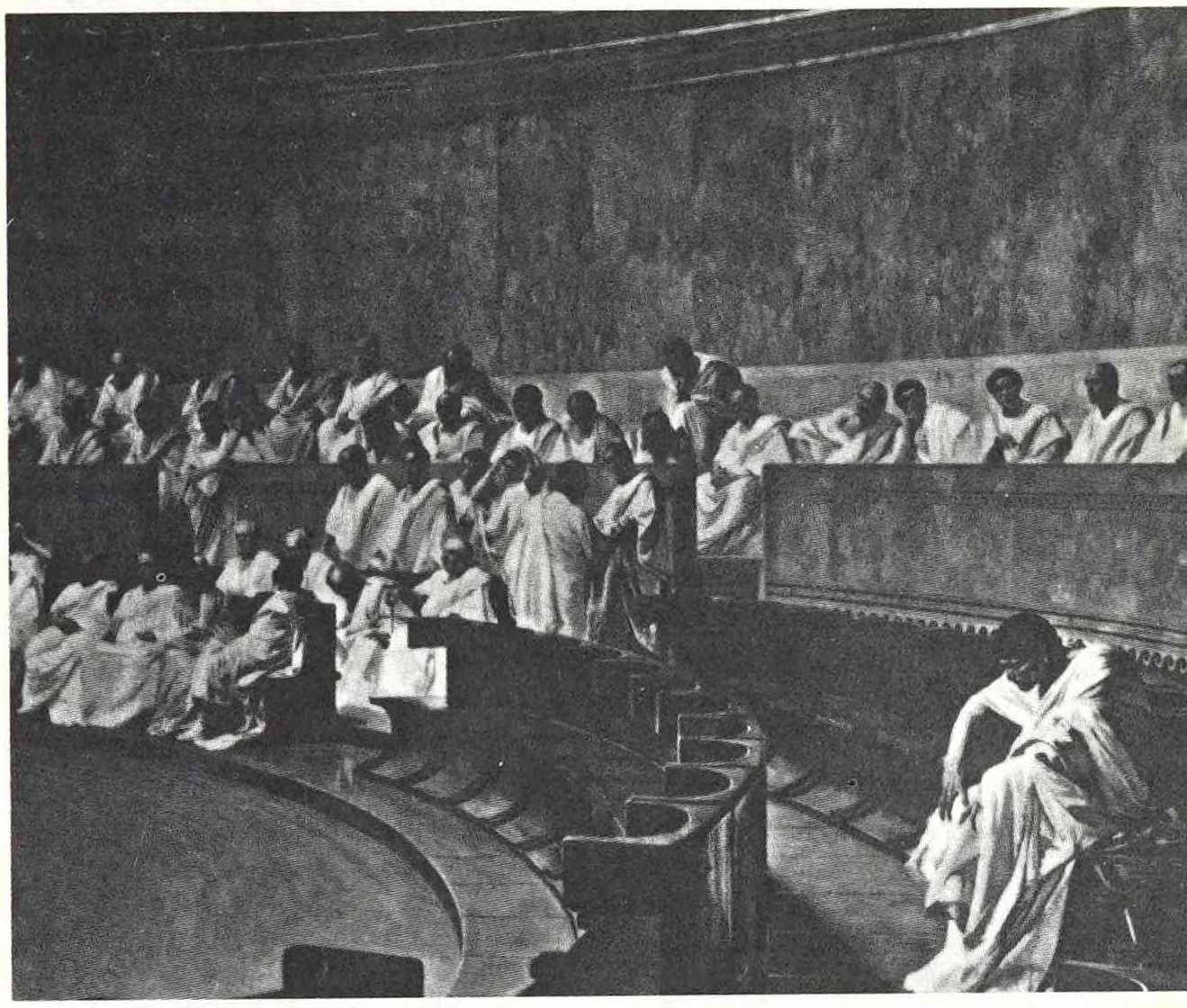
cataracts mentioned above. (612) It is difficult even in peacetime to approach the harbor of Alexandria [*a*], since the entrance is narrow, and submerged rocks make a straight course impossible. (613) On the left the channel is protected by artificial moles; on the right, the island called Pharos [*a*] juts out, supporting an enormous tower [*b*] whose beacon-light is visible three hundred furlongs [*c*] away to mariners making for port, warning them to anchor at night some distance off because of the difficulty of making port. (614) The island is surrounded by immense sea walls raised by human hands; waves dashing against these and breaking around the piers opposite the sea render the channel rough and the strait perilous. (615) Inside, however, the harbor is perfectly safe and is thirty furlongs [*d*] in length. To this port is brought everything the country lacks for its welfare, and from it the surplus products are exported to every part of the world.

6. Alexandria secured by Tiberius Alexander; general acclamation for Vespasian

(616) Naturally Vespasian was anxious to gain control there and thereby to ensure the stability of the whole empire. He wrote at once to Tiberius Alexander, the governor of Egypt [*a*] and Alexandria, to inform him of the army's determination, which forced him to shoulder the burden of empire, and to enlist his cooperation and assistance. (617) After reading this letter in public, Alexander promptly required the legions and the people to swear allegiance to Vespasian; both were delighted to obey, knowing what an excellent man he was from his conduct of the campaigns in their neighborhood. (618) Thus, having the interests of the empire entrusted in his charge, Tiberius got everything ready for Vespasian's arrival; and in a flash rumor spread the news of the new emperor in the east and every city celebrated the good news and offered sacrifices on his behalf. (619) But the legions of Moesia and Pannonia [*b*], recently aroused by the impudence of Vitellius, were even more delighted to swear allegiance to Vespasian [*b*]. (620) Setting out from Caesarea, Vespasian proceeded to Berytus [*c*] where many deputations from Syria and many other provinces awaited him. They brought from all the various cities crowns and congratulatory decrees. (621) Mucianius, governor of the province, arrived too with news of the universal enthusiasm and the swearing of the oath of allegiance in every city.

7. Josephus liberated from bonds

(622) Now that fortune was furthering his wishes everywhere and that circumstances had to a great extent combined to conspire in his favor, Vespasian believed that divine providence had assisted him to seize the reins of office and that some just destiny was choosing him as sovereign of the world. (623) He recalled a successions of omens [*a*] which had foretold his reign, and remembered the words of Josephus,



Vespasian was elected Consul by the Roman Senate

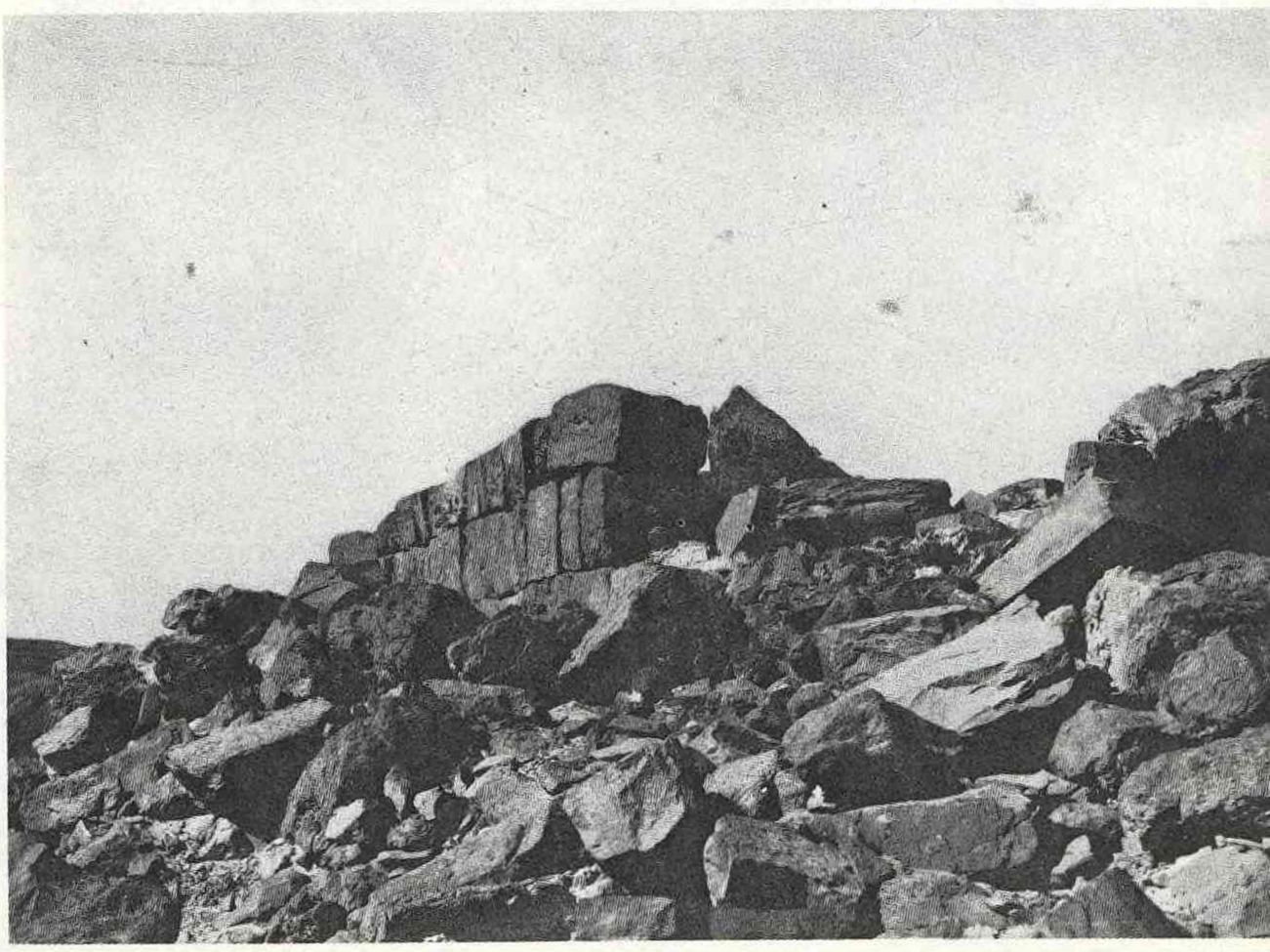
619[*b*] *Moesia.* 6 f. 598[*b*]. *Pannonia,* the provinces south of the Danube. The legions in Moesia were III Gallica, VII Claudia, and VIII Augusta; those of Pannonia, the VII Galbiana and XIII Gemina. All in all, these legions, added to those in Palestine, Syria and Egypt, would number approximately 14, half of the Roman army altogether, with auxiliary troops and the forces of client kings which could be at the disposal of a new candidate—Vespasian. See also 632 below.

620[*c*] *Berytus* = Modern Beirut at the foot of Mount Lebanon.

623[*a*] *Omens* Tacitus (*Hist.* II, 78), Suetonius (*Vesp.* 5) and Dio Cassius (LXVI 1) mention various *omina imperii,* and the last two refer also to the prophecy of Josephus. (Cf. *War* III, 404.)

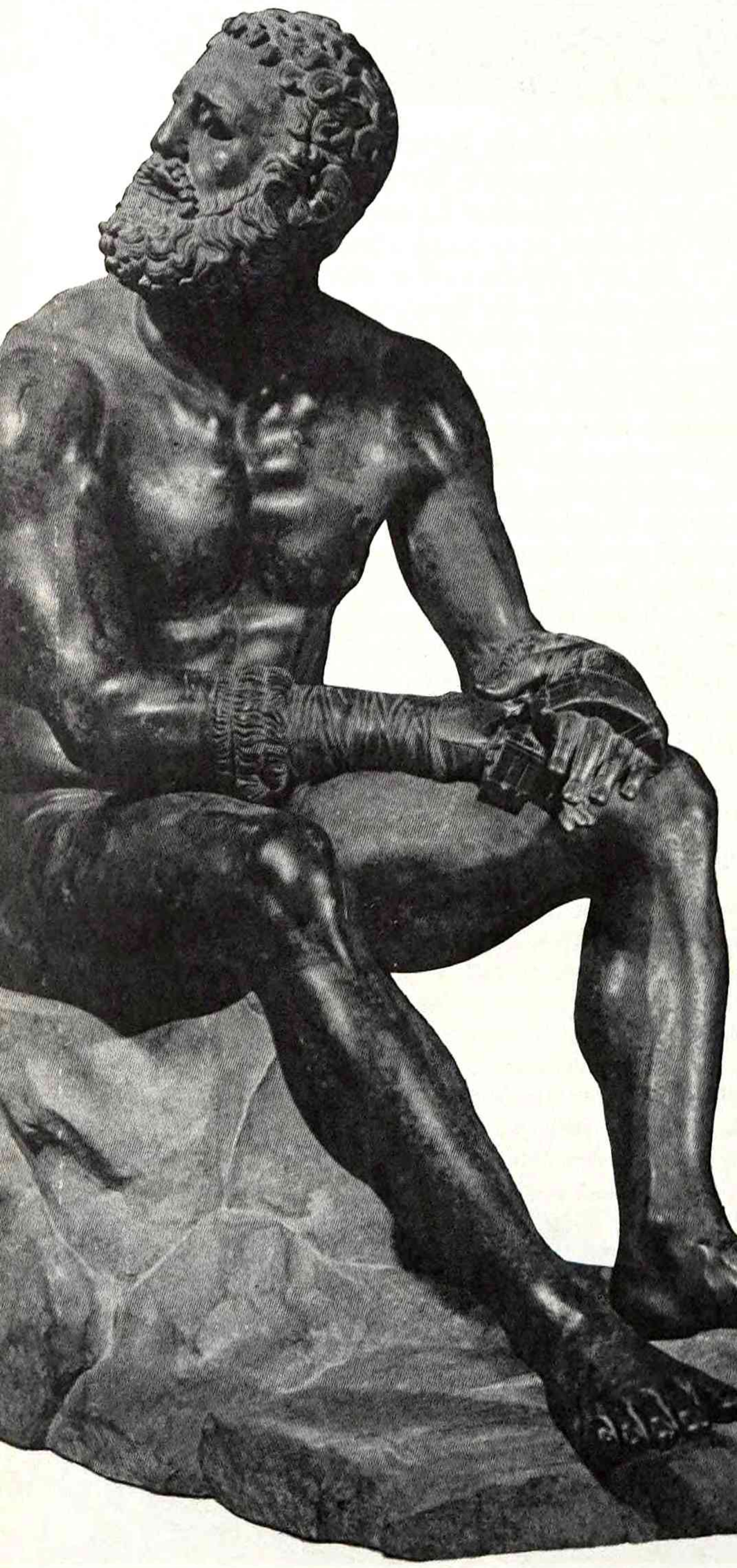
623[*b*] *War* III, 401.

Remains of a Roman fort on the route from southern Judaea to Egypt



625[*c*] *"to be divine"* = to be divinely inspired.
626[*d*] *"Minister of the voice,"* its mouthpiece.
629[*e*] *Enfranchisement* A legal situation equivalent to a free pardon. Josephus had been a prisoner in chains for two years. His enfranchisement guaranteed him full civil rights in Rome. This was the first honor that the new emperor bestowed upon Josephus.
632[*a*] Mucianus set off for Italy with legion VII and 13,000 veteran soldiers of other units, ordering the Black Sea fleet to sail to Byzantium (Constantinople) as an invasion of Italy by fleet was apparently contemplated, though later abandoned.
632[*b*] *Phrygia* The restless and energetic Antonius Primus also led the two legions of Pannonia. He was the most important agent in securing the success of Vespasian. Meanwhile, as Tacitus expresses it: "Vitellius... hidden in the shade of his garden like a lazy animal which lies torpid if you give it food, paid no regard to the past, present, or future." (*Hist.* III, 36.)
634[*d*] Cf. 547.

An athlete



who had ventured, while Nero was still alive, to address him as Emperor [*b*]. (624) He was grieved to think that the man was still a prisoner in his hands. Sending for Mucianus and his other officers and friends, he first enlarged on Josephus' valiant deeds and all the difficulties he had created for the Romans at Jotapata; (625) and then he mentioned his predictions, which he himself had suspected at the time of being inventions springing from fear, but which had been proved, by time and the course of events, to be divine [*c*]. (626) "It is shocking," he said, "that one who prophesied my election to power and was the minister of the voice [*d*] of God should still be treated as a captive and a prisoner." Then, summoning Josephus, he ordered him to be set free. (627) Seeing a foreigner receive such recompense, the officers felt that they could expect brilliant honors for themselves; (628) but Titus, who was present with his father, said "Justice, father, demands that Josephus' disgrace should be removed as well as his fetters. If instead of unfastening his chains we cut them through, it will be equivalent to a free pardon." This is the usual procedure in the case of a man unjustly put in irons. Vespasian agreed, and a man came forward and severed the chain with an axe. (629) Josephus, having thus gained his enfranchisement [*e*] as a reward for his prophecies, was now believed really capable of foretelling the future.

Chapter XI

1. Mucianus sent by Vespasian to Italy with an army

(630) Vespasian, after replying to the deputations, appointed various governors with due consideration to the claims of justice and the merits of the candidates, and proceeded to Antioch. (631) There he considered in which direction to turn, and decided that affairs in Rome were more important than a march [*b*] to Alexandria, since the latter was secured, while Rome had been thrown into disorder by Vitellius. (632) Accordingly, he sent Mucianus to Italy with a substantial body of cavalry and infantry [*a*]. The latter, afraid to sail in the depth of winter, marched his army overland through Cappadocia and Phrygia [*b*].

2. Another army led by Antonius Primus against Vitellius

(633) At this time, Antonius Primus, along with the third legion from Moesia where he was then in command [*c*], was also rapidly advancing to join battle with Vitellius. (634) The latter had sent Caecina Alienus with a large force to oppose him, having great confidence in this man in view of his defeat of Otho [*d*]. Setting out with all speed from Rome, he met with

Antonius near Cremona, a town in Gaul, on the Italian frontiers; (635) but when he saw the size and discipline of the enemy, he would not venture on an engagement and, as retreat seemed dangerous, he contemplated treason [*e*]. (636) Assembling his centurions and tribunes, he urged them to go over to Antonius, minimizing the resources of Vitellius and magnifying the strength of Vespasian. (637) "The one," he said, "has but the name of sovereign, while the other has the power; and it would be better for you to anticipate the inevitable and make a virtue of necessity. As you are bound to be defeated in the field if you give battle, you should use your wits to avert the danger. (638) For Vespasian is quite capable, without your assistance, of acquiring what remains to be gained, while Vitellius, even with your support, can not hold what he has already."

3. The Vitellian army crushed by Antoninus

(639) Speaking to this effect at considerable length, Caecina persuaded his whole force to desert to Antonius. (640) But that very night the soldiers were overcome with remorse and fear of the man who had ordered them to fight, should he prove the winner; so, drawing swords, they rushed off to kill Caecina and would have carried out their intention, if the tribunes had not thrown themselves at the feet of their companies and begged them not to [*e*]. (641) They spared his life but bound the traitor with the intention of sending him off to Vitellius. Informed of this, Primus at once summoned his men and led them against the mutineers. (642) The latter took up arms, resisted for a while, but were then routed and fled for Cremona. Primus and his cavalry intercepted their entrance and destroyed most of them before the city. Then, charging in with the survivors, he gave his troops permission to pillage the town. (643) In the ensuing slaughter many foreign merchants [*a*] and many of the inhabitants lost their lives, as well as Vitellius' entire army [*a*], numbering thirty thousand two hundred men. Of the troops from Moesia, Antonius lost four thousand five hundred. (644) Antonius set Caecina free and sent him to Vespasian to report these events. On his arrival, Caecina was received by the emperor with such unanticipated honors that his treason was soon forgotten.

4. Fighting for the Capitol

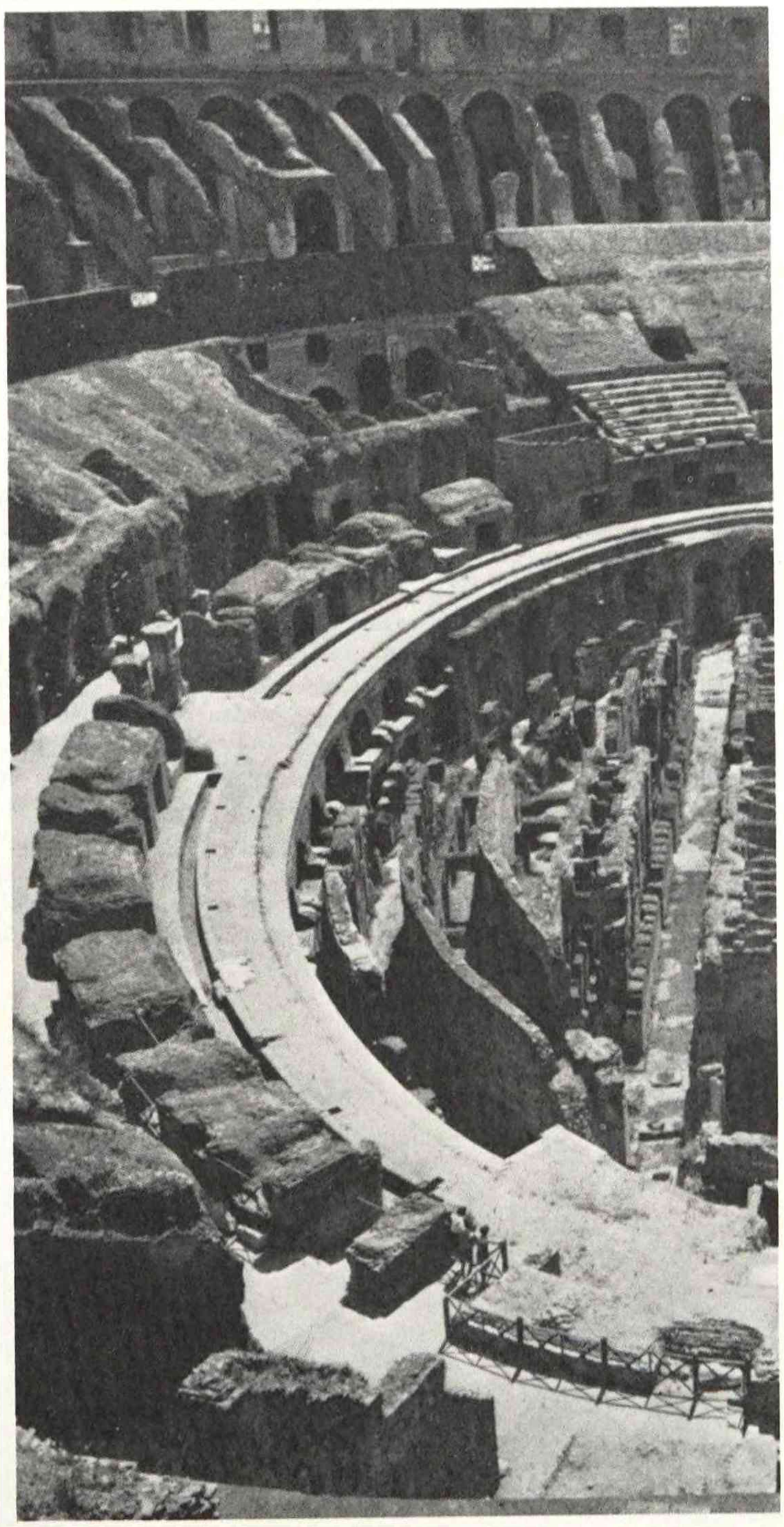
(645) At Rome [*b*], too, Sabinus now regained courage on hearing that Antonius was approaching. Collecting the armed cohorts of the night watch, he seized the Capitol in the night. (646) Early the next day [*b*], he was joined by many of the nobility, among them his nephew Domitian, the chief pillar of his hopes of success. (647) Vitellius was less concerned about Primus, but was furious with the rebels who were supporting Sabinus in his revolt. His congenital cruelty made him thirst for noble blood and out of

635[*e*]–640[*c*] Caecina's treachery occurred before the battle of Cremona (fought at the end of October), but the delay incurred had been a godsend to Antonius and gave him time to collect an imposing army to meet Vitellius. Moreover, Caecina's betrayal had a demoralizing effect on his army, which abandoned its position and moved to Cremona. In the process, it threw open to the Flavian army the direct road to Rome.

643[*a*] *Entire army* Josephus, who goes into detail about Caecina's betrayal, fails to underline the cruelty of Primus' forces at Cremona. "Murder and rapine raged for days and the city was finally burned to the ground. Though it was rebuilt soon after, its people could not forget the horrors of the past for many years." (CAH, p. 835.)

645[*b*]–648[*b*] *Sabinus* As told by Tacitus in *Hist.* XXX, 36 f., 69–84 f., Sabinus, brother of Vespasian, in the hope of avoiding bloodshed, preferred to negotiate with Vitellius, who intended to abdicate. But he did not realize to what length the Vitellian soldiers were prepared to go. A collision between them and Sabinus occurred as the former tried to force their way into the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitol. The famous shrine caught fire and was burned to the ground.

Coliseum at Rome, constructed by Vespasian, and a famous athlete



649[*c*] *Domitian* escaped, disguised as a temple-servant, but Sabinus was killed.

650[*d*] *Antonius* would have preferred to postpone his entry into Rome till the next day, but his soldiers would not listen. The army advanced in three columns and was desperately opposed at every point, while the masses looked on, as at a gladiatorial show, cheering the victors and ignoring the defeated. The baths and eating houses were crowded with spectators. Vitellius' surviving troops were driven back to the praetorian camp, where a last stand was made (Tacitus, *ibid.*).

652[*e*] April to December 21, AD 70.

654[*a*] The behavior of the Danubian legion in Rome recalled their doings in Cremona. It is reported that Vespasian's son, Domitian, devoted himself to pleasure and exercised no authority; the population was relieved when Mucianus reached Rome in January, AD 70 (Tacitus, *ibid.*, IV, 1 11 f.).

656[*b*] From Britain and Western Europe to Parthia. King Vologesus offered him 40,000 Parthian cavalry (Tacit. *ibid.* IV, 5).

658[*c*] Cf. 654 [*a*]. For six months, Mucianus, who had arrived in January, was practically ruler of Rome, and it was not until the summer that Emperor Vespasian arrived in the city. By that time, the Capitol had been rebuilt and dedicated.

659[*a*] *Nicopolis,* "the city of victory," some 4 kms east of Alexandria, was founded by Augustus in 24 BC on the site of his final defeat of Mark Antony in the same year, and to commemorate the surrender of Alexandria.

659[*b*] *Up the Nile,* or *crossing the Egyptian Delta* The key to the obscure sentence may be deduced from its conclusion, namely the "Mendesian canton," a marshy and lake-strewn area of the Nile Delta which had seven branches in ancient times flowing into the sea. (The modern Delta has only two streams). The last three eastern branches of the Nile Delta were the Mendesian, Tanitic, and the Pelusiac, and their courses were named after neighboring cities or districts. Therefore it is assumed that Titus' army crossed the Delta and part of the route by foot, forded canals, and reached the nome of Mendes and its ancient sites southwest of Lake Menzaleh.

659[*c*] *"Thmuis"* or Tmai (Tell abu-es Sālām) southwest of Mandes, near the site presently crossed by the Suez Canal.

sheer cruelty he let loose upon the Capitol that part of his army which had accompanied him [from Germany]. (648) Great courage was displayed by both sides, the assailants and the men who fought them from the temple. But in the end, thanks to their superior numbers, the German troops captured the hill [*b*]. (649) Domitian and many leading Romans miraculously escaped [*c*], but the rest of the garrison was annihilated. Sabinus was brought before Vitellius and executed, while the soldiers plundered the votive offerings and set the temple on fire. [*c*].

The ultimate end of Vitellius

(650) The next day Antonius marched in with his army; the soldiers of Vitellius met him, joined battle in three areas of the city [*d*], and perished to a man [*d*]. (651) Out of the palace came Vitellius, drunk and gorged to the eyes in a last fling at a banquet more luxurious then ever. (652) Dragged through the mob and subjected to indignities of every kind, he was finally knifed to death in the heart of Rome. He had ruled eight months and five days [*e*], and if fate had prolonged his life I doubt whether the imperial reign itself could have satisfied his lust. (653) Other casualties totalled more than fifty thousand slain. (654) These events took place on the third of the month of Apellaeus. The next day Mucianus entered with his army and stopped further slaughter by Antonius' men who were still searching the houses and killing not only many of Vitellius' soldiers, but many supposed partisans among the people. In their rage they made no discrimination [*a*]. Mucianus then brought forward Domitian and commended him to the citizens as their ruler pending his father's arrival. (655) The people, free at last from fear, acclaimed Vespasian as emperor, and held a combined celebration for his establishment in power and Vitellius' overthrow.

5. Vespasian's arrival at Alexandria; Titus sent against Jerusalem

(656) Upon arriving at Alexandria, Vespasian received the good news from Rome and was greeted by embassies of congratulation from every quarter of the world, now his own [*b*]. The city, though second only to Rome in size, proved too small for the throngs. (657) Now that the whole empire was secure and the Roman state so surprisingly reestablished, Vespasian turned his attention to what remained to be done in Judaea. (658) He was, however, eager to embark for Rome [*c*] as soon as winter ended, and was now rapidly settling affairs in Alexandria. But he sent Titus with the pick of his army to crush Jerusalem. (659) Titus, accordingly, marched overland to Nicopolis [*a*] (a distance of twenty furlongs from Alexandria) [*a*]. There he embarked his army on ships of war and sailed up the Nile [*b*] past the Mendesian canton [*b*] to the city of Thmuis [*c*]. (660) Disembarking there, he

marched to the little town of Tanis [*d*], where he encamped for the night. His second day's march brought him to Heracleopolis [*e*], and his third to Pelusium [*f*]. (661) Having halted there two days to rest his army, on the third day he crossed the Pelusiac river-mouth [*f*], and after advancing a day's march across the desert encamped near the temple of Casian Zeus [*a*]. The next day he proceeded to Ostrakene [*b*] where there was no water. To this station, water has to be brought from elsewhere for the use of the inhabitants. (662) He next broke his journey at Rhinocorura [*c*], marching on from there to Raphia [*d*]—his fourth stopping place on the Palestinian border. (663) His fifth camp he pitched at Gaza; then he marched to Ascalon, from there to Jamnia, then to Joppa; from there he finally reached Caesarea, where he had decided to assemble his forces [*e*].

Domitian, brother of Titus (National Museum, Rome)

660[*d*] *Tanis*, or San, the Zoan of the Old Testament in the Land of Goshen (Num. 13, 22) some 33 kms east of Thmuis and south of Lake Menzaleh and the Tanitic branch of the Delta. There he had disembarked. The excavations led by Montet and Yoyotte at San-el-Hāgār (1965–1969) have revealed that the city in Roman days was identical with *Avaris*, the capital and stronghold of the Asiatic *Hyksos* who had invaded and ruled Egypt from 1730 to 1580 BC. An important memorial of the event, the *"Four Hundred Year Stele"* erected by Rameses II commemorated the rule of the god Seth over Egypt, who is shown at the top of the stele, wearing an Asiatic garment and headdress. In any case, the 400-year anniversary marks the date of the refounding of Tanis by Rameses I. (Josephus knew about Tanis and in his *Contra Apion* quotes the ancient historian Manetho as identifying Zoan with Avaris and attributing, wrongly, the story of the Exodus to the Hyksos episode.) Many tombs and remains of the Hyksos were also uncovered there, as well as imposing temples and remains of the 21st Egyptian dynasty (1085-1054 BC), and later dynasties which made it their capital until 600 BC.

660[*e*] *Heracleopolis Parva*, a site nearby, now covered by Lake Menzaleh.

660[*f*]–661 *Pèlusium* (Tell Fārāma) An important commercial center on the Nabataean caravan road, lying on the border of Egypt and Sinai. It was situated at the eastern end of the ancient Pelusiac branch of the Nile, since silted, and east of the present Suez Canal. This was the *Migdol* (an Egyptian border fort) near which the Israelites traversed the Sea (Exodus 13). Past events which occurred there are recorded in *War* I, 175, 187–189 f., 278, 362; IV 610.

661[*a*] *Casian Zeus* Site of the temple of Zeus (Ras el-Qasrun) near the top of Mt. Cassius, the biblical Baal Zaphon (Num. 33, 7), a sandstone range on the northern spit of land which divides the Lagoon of Serbonis (today's Bardawil) from the Mediterranean. According to Strabo, XVII, 760, Pompey's tomb was on the hillside.

661[*b*] *Ostrakene* We learn from Talm. *Menahot* 9, 15 that it was a source of salt derived from its salt pans and sold in Judaea.

662[*c*] *Rhinocorura*, modern El-Arish, a celebrated Nabatean caravan and trade center in northern Sinai. Wadi-el-Arish or the biblical "Brook of Egypt" marked the boundary between Egypt and the Land of Israel.

662[*d*] *Raphia* An autonomous city some 33.5 kms. south of Gaza; an important station on the historic Via Maris, the road leading from Egypt through Palestine, to the north. Roads leading east and south forked from Raphia.

663[*e*] *His forces* The new Roman crossing: The choice of a land route from Alexandria to Palestine for Titus' army, instead of following the direct sea route from Alexandria (which would suit small contingents), is accounted for by a radical change in the Roman road system, instituted recently, since the Jewish War. In order to facilitate the movement of large Roman forces between Alexandria and Antioch, the capital of Syria (and vice versa), the Romans began to build a road from Antioch to Ptolemais (Acre) as early as Nero's time and probably continued it southwards; hence the march of Titus from Alexandria to Judaea along the new layout of that road. (M. Avi-Yonah; *The Jewish People in the 1st Century*, I, p. 113.)

1[*a*] Cf. *War* IV, 659-663.
3[*b*] *Disastrous progress* Cf. IV, 128 ff, referring to the events of the winter, namely a few months before Passover AD 69.
5[*c*] *Eleazar son of Simon,* who formed a new faction, was already mentioned in *War* II, 564 ff and IV, 225.
6[*d*] Judes son of Chelcias, is a Greek distortion of the Hebrew Judah ben Helkiah.

BOOK V

A. THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM — PRELIMINARIES

Chapter I

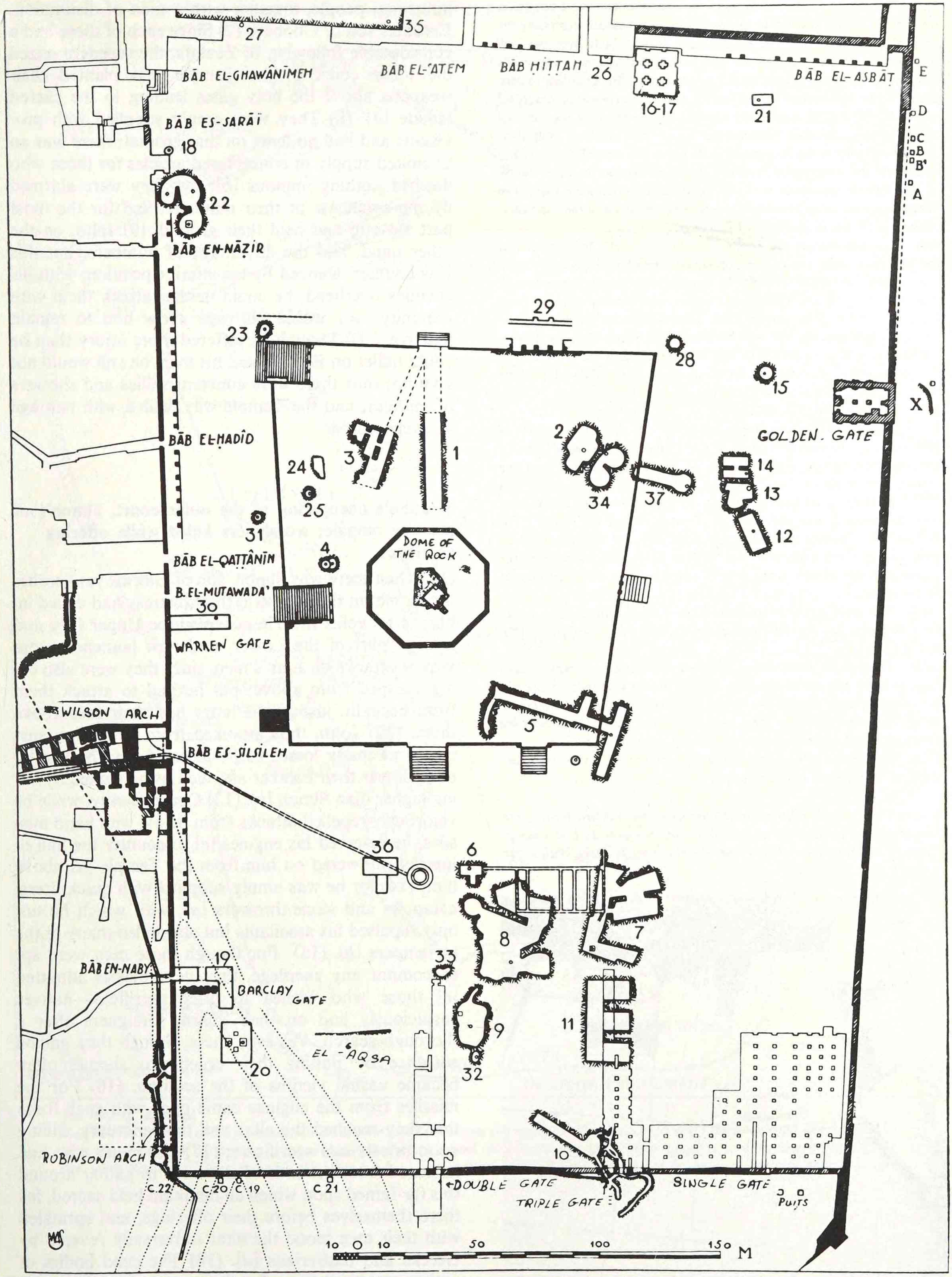
1. Three factions in Jerusalem during the first phase of the siege

(1) Titus, having in the way we described above crossed the desert from Egypt to Syria [*a*], arrived at Caesarea, where he had decided to marshal his forces before the campaign. (2) But while he was still at Alexandria, assisting his father to establish the sovereignty newly-entrusted to them by God, the civil strife in Jerusalem had reached a fresh climax and became a three-cornered fight, as one of the parties had turned its arms against itself—a discord which, as among criminals, might be called good and the work of justice. (3) The Zealots' attack on the people, the first step towards the cities' destruction, has been accurately described already, including its origin and disastrous progress [*b*]. (4) It would not be far wrong to describe this as a faction within a faction, like a raving beast driven by lack of other food at last to devour its own flesh.

2. The inner courts occupied by Eleazar's new faction

(5) Eleazar, son of Simon [*c*], who had originally caused the break between the Zealots and the people and removed them into the sacred precincts, now professed indignation at the outrages daily committed by John, who continued his murderous career unabated, but in reality because he could not bear to submit to a tyrant junior to himself, and had set his heart on absolute power and despotic rule of his own; (6) he seceded from the party, taking with him Judes son of Chelcias [*d*], and Simon son of Esron, both

On the opposite page: A scene of the Temple Mount—seen through archaeology: This is a cross-section map of the ancient area of the Temple Mount which lies beneath the colorful Islamic courts, edifices, gates, and verdure as they appear to the modern visitor. The vast quadrangle comprised several entrance gates, with the outer courts *which surrounded the* inner elevated platform *dominated by the Islamic "Dome of the Rock." The Herodian Temple stood at a certain place on the platform, though archaeologists are not agreed whether it is identical with the Dome. The numbers in this map indicate numerous underground structures of Herodian and other origin, most of them serving as cisterns until recently filled with water. The sites defined as gates (the Single gate, Double gate, Robinson Arch, Barclay gate, Wilson Arch, Warren gate, and probably the Golden gate or one near it) can be identified with the historic gates of the 1st century AD. The gates marked* "Bab" *are of later Arab origin (7th-8th centuries or later). The dotted area on the right-hand side represents the underground so-called Solomon Stables, which served as storage space, pens and stalls related to the sacrificial rites, etc.*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BĀB EL-ḤADÎD
BĀB EL-QATṬÂNÎN
B. EL-MUTAWADA'
WARREN GATE
WILSON ARCH
BĀB ES-SILSILEH
BĀB EN-NABY
BARCLAY GATE
EL-'AQSA
ROBINSON ARCH
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influential people, together with a man of distinction, Ezechias son of Chobari. (7) Since each of these had a considerable following of Zealots, the seceders seized the inner court of the Temple and planted their weapons above the holy gates leading to the sacred façade [*a*]. (8) They were amply supplied with provisions and had no fears on that ground; there was an unlimited supply of consecrated articles for those who deemed nothing impious [*b*]; but they were alarmed by the smallness of their numbers, and for the most part sat still and held their ground. (9) John, on the other hand, had the advantage of numbers, but this was counterbalanced by his inferior position; with his enemies overhead, he could neither attack them with impunity, nor would his rage allow him to remain inactive. (10) Though he suffered more injury than he could inflict on Eleazar and his men, he still would not give up; thus there were constant sallies and showers of missiles, and the Temple was defiled with carnage at every corner.

3. John's occupation of the outer court, Simon's of the city outside; worshipers killed while offering sacrifices

(11) Then there was Simon, son of Gioras, yet another tyrant whom the people in their distress had called in, hoping for relief [*a*]. He occupied the Upper City and a large part of the Lower, and now launched more violent attacks on John's men, since they were also being assailed from above; but he had to attack them from beneath, just as the latter had their foes above them. (12) John, thus attacked from two sides, sustained as many losses as he inflicted, and he lost by being lower then Eleazar as much as he gained by being higher than Simon [*b*]. (13) Consequently, while he vigorously repelled attacks from below with hand missiles, he reserved his engines [*c*] to counter the hail of javelins showered on him from the Temple [*d*] above him; (14) for he was amply supplied with quick-firers, catapults and stone-throwers [*a*], with which he not only repulsed his assailants but also killed many of the worshipers [*b*]. (15) For though these men were apt to commit any sacrilege, they nevertheless admitted [*c*] those who wished to offer sacrifices—natives suspiciously and on their guard, foreigners after a thorough search. Yet even these, though they gained entrance by putting their cruelty to shame, often became casual victims of the sedition. (16) For the missiles from the engines came over with such force that they reached the altar and the sanctuary, falling upon priests and sacrificers; (17) and many who had hastened from the ends of the earth to gather around this far-famed spot, which all mankind held sacred, fell there themselves before their offerings, and sprinkled with their own blood the altar universally revered by Greeks and barbarians [*d*]. (18) The dead bodies of natives and aliens, of priests and laymen, were

7[*a*] The Zealot faction of Eleazar captured the innermost courts on the Temple Mount situated at its upper level (see diagram describing the respective zones of the internecine war). It was built over the *chēl* (pronounced ḥel), an elevated platform surrounded by strong high walls containing ten gates which they barred, except the guarded eastern entrance (the architecture of the Temple Mount courts will be described below, V, 192 a-d). It is generally agreed that this elevation corresponds to the present elevated platform on which the Muslims built their *Haram-es-Sherif* in the 7th century AD. From this central elevation and stronghold the weapons of Eleazar's forces dominated the outer courts of the Temple esplanade occupied by John of Gischala's men. The internecine war within Jerusalem was thus conducted in three concentric circles, as shown in the map of the siege.

8[*b*] Josephus blames the Zealots for the "impious" consumption of the holy food and use of the consecrated articles, though he—as a priest—had overlooked the *halakha* stating that when life is at stake, all these prohibitions are set aside. Other ancient historians, aside from Josephus, who had an axe to grind, generally praise the piety of the Zealots, which accords well with the pictures of them which the Judaeo-Christian Hippolytus drew. He said that the Zealots were extreme in their observation of Jewish prescriptions, which is why they adopted the name of Zealots (in Hebrew Qānā'īm).

11[*a*] Cf. *War* IV, 573, 578.

12[*b*] Simon-bar-Giora commanded most of the other areas of Jerusalem, south, west and north of the Temple Mount, while John of Gischala commanded the esplanade of the Temple Mount and the easterly border area of the capital (cf. 7 [*a*]).

13[*c*] John's engines were placed on the towers which he had erected over the outer courts and walls of Temple Mount (IV. 578). "The Temple" refers here to the inner courts (cf. 7 [*a*]) held by Eleazar, which were also exposed to John's assaults. The projectiles fell all over the sacred precincts as well as the altar of sacrifices with the consequences described below.

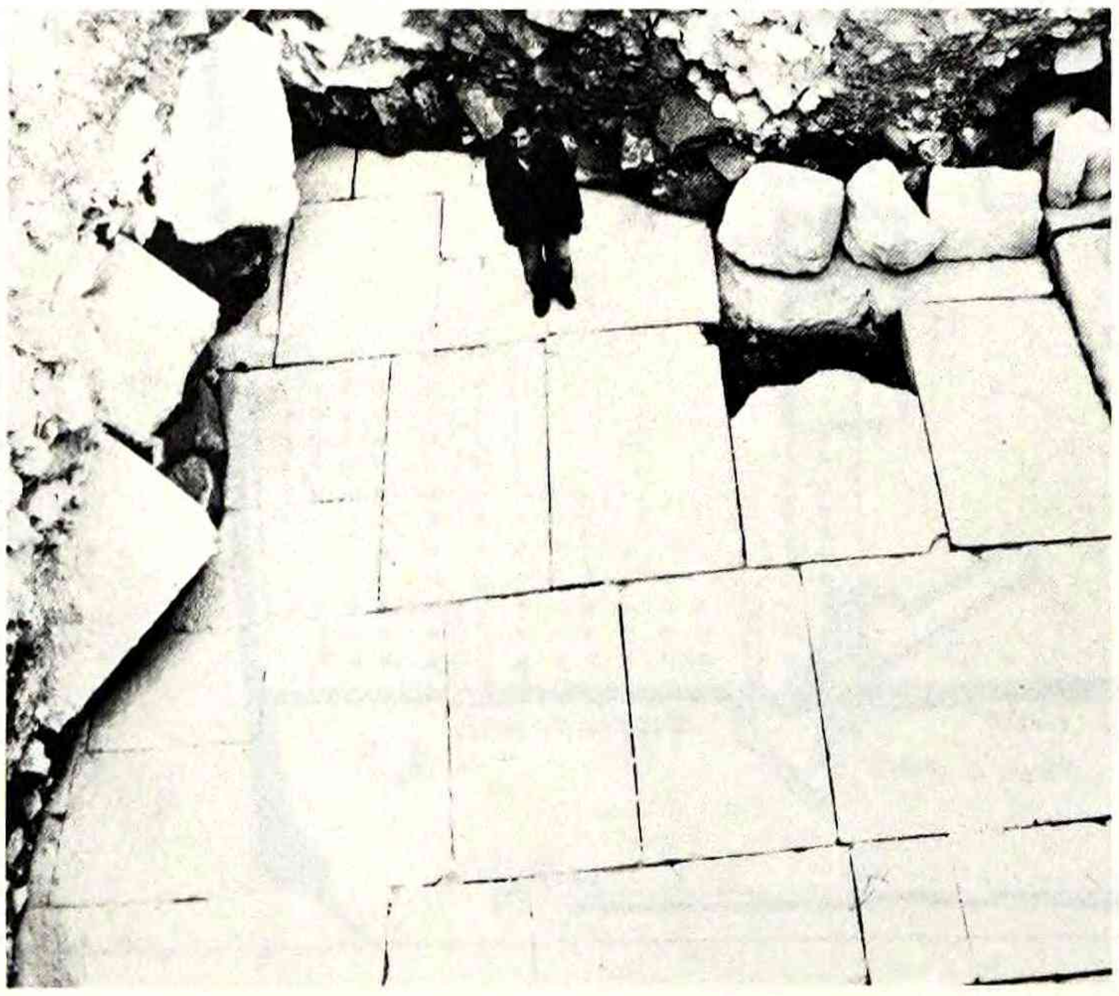
14[*a*] The stone-throwers were the Roman-made *balistae;* the quick-firers or *catapultae* for discharging arrows, also called *scorpiones* (III, 80).

14[*b*] Throughout the days of the civil war, priests, residents, and pilgrims never stopped entering the Temple Mount area to participate in the imposing daily rites of the *whole offerings* and other sacrifices.

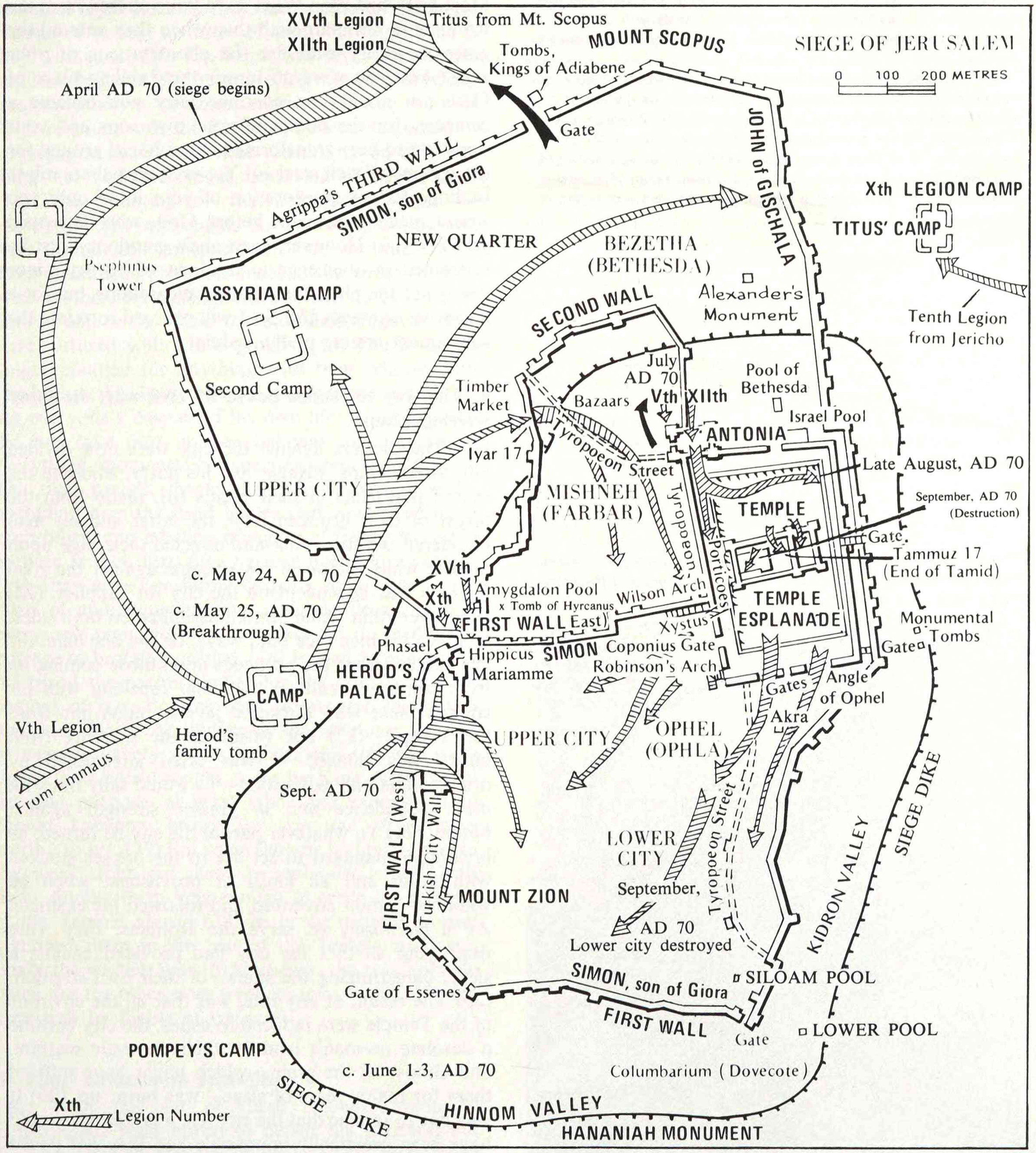
15[*c*] *Admitted* They let them pass an eastern gate which led to the *Court of Israel* on the upper level and the altar of sacrifices.

17[*d*] *Barbarians* Non-Greek-speaking gentiles from other countries; the term is not used in a derogatory sense as it is today.

A section of Tyropoeon Street, which bordered the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, constructed of vast pavements bordered by a low ramp. The huge stones on the right fell from the top of the Western Wall of the ramparts



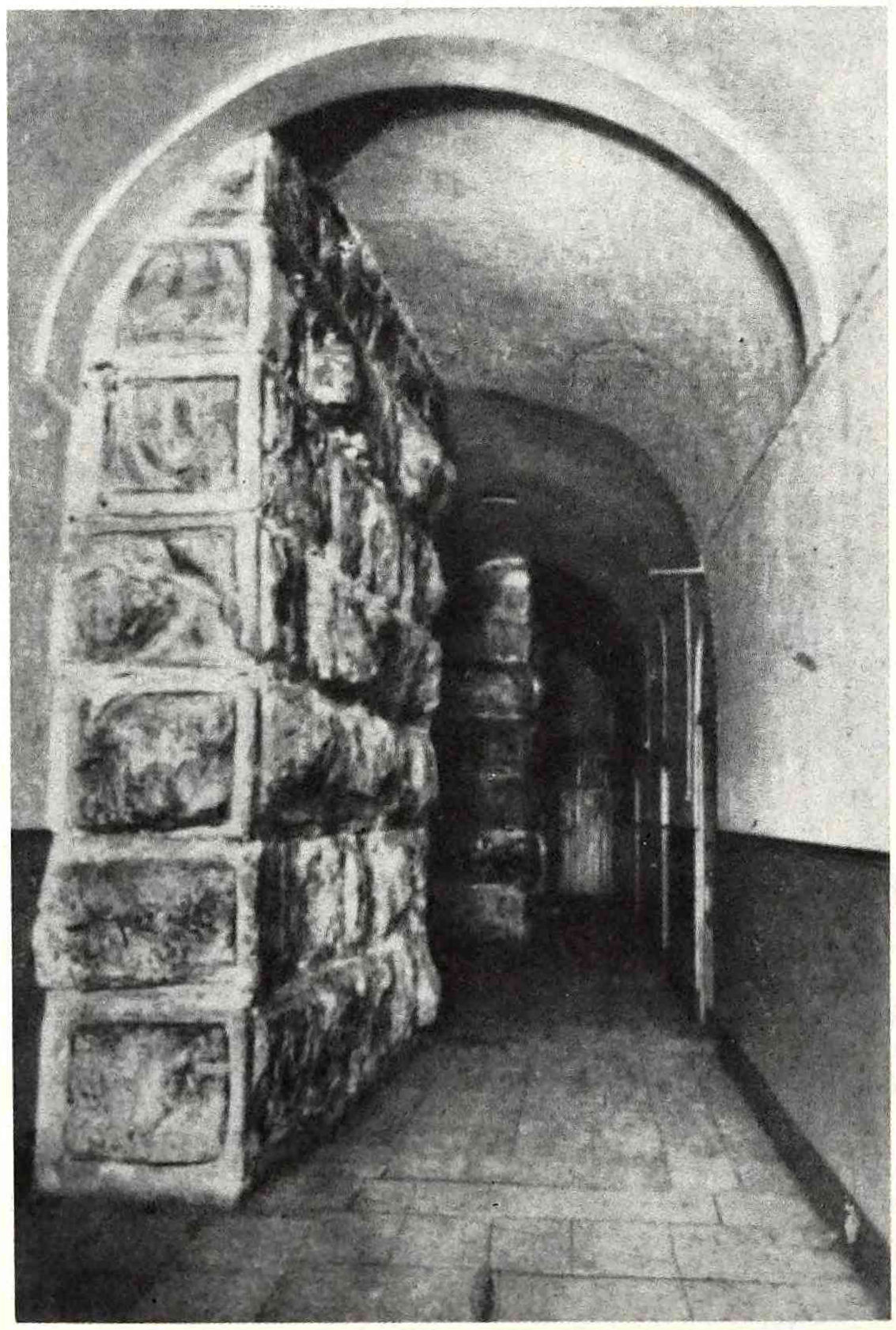
SIEGE OF JERUSALEM



The map of the siege
Josephus' description of the factional war on and around the Temple site explains that Eleazar occupied the inner area and fortified its gates (unidentified in the present chart); John of Gischala occupied the Antonia fort, the Temple ramparts, and the eastern walls of the city, while Simon-bar-Giora defended the other southern and western areas of Jerusalem, shown in the map. *See also map on p. 371*

19[*a*] Josephus broke here into a feigned lamentation. The view has already been expressed that he was similar to a prophet weeping to himself like Jeremiah (I. Simhoni in the *Introduction* to the Hebrew version of *War)* or like the apocryphal prophet Baruch in 4, 18-21.
20[*b*] See Josephus' Preamble to *War* I, 11, regarding a historian's discipline.
21[*a*] These were sacred "first fruits" (*bikurei hakodesh* in Hebrew) as well as tithes to the priests brought by worshipers to the Temple as ordained by the Law (Num. 18, 21; Nehem. 10, 38-40). They were stored in the special chambers which bordered the inner courts on the upper level. The fate of the grain stores brought as tithes which were destroyed as a result of the fighting is also mentioned in Talm. *Gittin* 40, 6, as well as Tacitus (*Hist.* V, 12) in his references to the civil war raging in Jerusalem.

Herodian underground foundations of the Tower of Psephinus (Kasr el Jallud), northwest of the city. This was the starting point of the Third Wall



mingled in a mass, and the blood of all manner of corpses formed pools in the sacred courts of God. (19) Most wretched city! What have you suffered from the Romans to compare with this, when they entered the gates to purify with fire the abominations of your sons? For you were no longer the dwelling place of God, nor could you continue after you became a cemetery for the bodies of your own sons and your Temple had been transformed into a burial ground for the victims of civil war! [*a*] Yet even now there might be hope for an amelioration of your lot if only you would make atonement before God, who destroyed you [*a*]. (20) However, even one's emotions must be restrained in obedience to the laws of history, since this is not the place for private lamentations, but for a narrative of events [*b*]. So I will proceed to relate the subsequent course of the sedition.

4. The way to famine paved by civil war; the three warring camps

(21) The plotters against the city were now divided into three camps. Eleazar and his party, who had the sacred first-fruits in their hands [*a*], made John the target of their drunken fury; the latter and his men plundered the town folk and directed their rage upon Simon, while Simon in his struggle against the rival factions was dependent on the city for supplies. (22) Whenever John found himself assaulted on both sides, he made his men face both ways, on the one hand firing missiles from the porticoes upon those coming up from the town, and on the other repelling with his engines those who showered javelins upon him from the Temple; (23) but whenever the pressure from above was relaxed—it was often interrupted by drunkenness and exhaustion—he would sally out with more confidence and in greater strength against Simon. (24) To whatever part of the city he turned, he invariably managed to set fire to the houses stocked with grain and all kinds of provisions; when he withdrew Simon advanced and followed his example. As if purposely to serve the Romans, they were destroying all that the city had provided against a siege, hamstringing the sinews of their own strength. (25) The result, at any rate, was that all the environs of the Temple were reduced to ashes, the city became a desolate no-man's land for their domestic warfare, and almost all the grain—which might have sufficed them for many years of siege—was burnt up. (26) It was due to famine that the city fell, a fate which would have been practically impossible had they not paved the way for it themselves.

5. The miseries of the people of Jerusalem

(27) The entire city was now beset on all sides by the battling plotters and their rabble, and between them the people were torn to bits like a huge carcass. (28) Old men and women in their helpless state prayed for the Romans to come, and looked forward to the war

outside, which would free them from the miseries within. (29) Bitter despondency and alarm filled the hearts of loyal citizens; they had no chance to plan a change of policy, no hope of treaty or flight even if they wanted it; (30) for watch was kept everywhere, and the brigand chiefs, quarelling about everything else, executed as common enemies all who were in favor of peace with the Romans, or were suspected of intending to desert, and were unanimous on only one thing—to slaughter those deserving of deliverance. (31) The shouting of the combatants rang on ceaselessly day and night, but more harrowing still were the terrified lamentations of the mourners. (32) Their calamities provided, indeed, one cause of grief after another, but wailings were bottled up by consternation, and while afraid to voice their anguish, they were tortured with stifled groans. (33) The living no longer counted for anything with their relatives, no one bothered to bury the dead, the reason for both being everyone's despair of his own life; for those who did not take part in the civil war lost interest in everything, momentarily expecting certain death. (34) The rival parties, meanwhile, were locked in strife, trampling over the dead bodies that were piled upon each other, and inhaling draughts of frenzy from the corpses at their feet, they became even more savage. (35) They were constantly devising some new instrument of mutual destruction, and relentlessly putting every new plan into practice; they left no method of outrage or brutality untried. (36) Indeed John actually purloined the sacred timber for the construction of engines of war. For the chief priests and the people had once decided to underprop the sanctuary [*a*] and to raise it twenty cubits higher; and the necessary timber had been brought down by King Agrippa [*a*] for that purpose, at great labor and expense, from Mount Lebanon, beams for size and straightness worthy to see. (37) But when the war had put a stop to the work, John cut them up and built towers with them, finding them long enough to reach his enemies in the Temple above; (38) he brought them up and stationed them in the rear of the Temple court opposite the western gate [*b*] boundary, the only possible place, for the other sides were completely cut off from approach by flights of steps [*c*].

6. Titus' advance on Jerusalem

(39) With the aid of these engines, impiously constructed, John hoped to defeat his enemies, but God rendered his plan useless by bringing the Romans upon the scene before he had posted a single man upon his towers. (40) For Titus, after collecting part of his force at his headquarters, and ordering the rest to join him at Jerusalem, was now on the march from Caesarea. (41) He led the three legions [*a*] which under his father had previously laid Judaea waste, and the twelfth, which under Cestius had once been defeated [*b*]. This legion, generally renowned for its

36[*a*] *The timber prepared by Agrippa* When the text speaks at times about functions and occurrences in "the Temple", or the "sanctuary", it refers to the upper inner courts, as they do in the present case (and as shown in the diagram). In other words, Agrippa had not intended to raise the "sanctuary" proper by 30 feet (20 cubits) as this would surely have undermined or seriously damaged the rear of the Temple which housed the Holy of Holies. Moreover, we learn from *Middot* II, 1 (dealing with measurements of the free space which surrounded the Temple) that the "largest free space was on the south, the second largest on the east, the third on the north, and the smallest on the west." The latter is the narrow western space referred to in this instance where Agrippa planned some reinforcements. As this stood on a sloping area leading to the outer supporting wall of the esplanade, it may have faced a western gate (namely a fourth gate referred to in note on *War* V, 189 [*e*]; cf. *Antiq.* XV, 410-411); hence the obscure expression in the next para. (38 [*b*]) should be clarified.

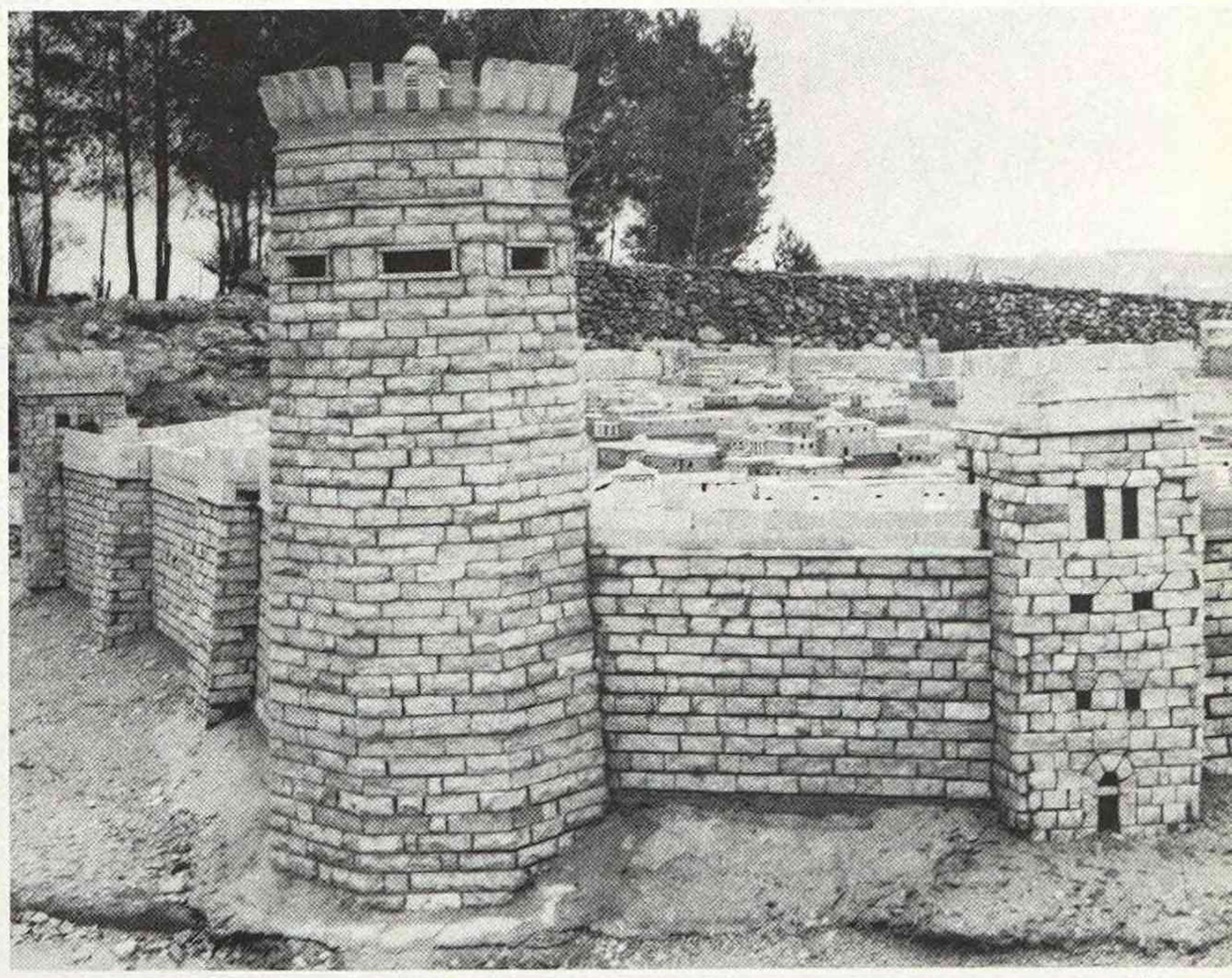
38[*b*] *Is the reference to a western hall, gate-room, or actual western gate?* "The rear of the Temple court" would be the (western) space between the upper or lower court and the outer retaining wall bordering on the esplanade in the west, where Agrippa planned some works which required long and solid timbers. John, as stated, used them, instead, to build towers high enough to overlook the inner, high courts occupied by Eleazar's Zealot forces.

38[*c*] The narrow western space referred to had no steps which led to the rear of the inner courts (on the upper level), while the approaches to the upper courts by other stairways were cut off (cf. 7[*a*]). John's predicament is resolved in the subsequent para. 39.

41[*a*] *Titus' army* consisted of the fifth, tenth, fifteenth—Vespasian's distinguished legions—and the twelth, one legion more than Vespasian's army when it set out on the march into Galilee. No mention is made of Vespasian's eighteen cohorts (*War* III, 66) numbering about 11,000 men. Titus commanded, in addition, the auxiliaries of allied kings (cf. 42) and 5,000 picked men from Egypt and the Euphrates (cf. 44); his total strength is not specified, but it is assumed to have numbered about 60,000 legionaries and auxiliaries, plus the numerous train of followers and freed slaves (47 [*c*]), an adequate force required for the capture of a large fortified city like Jerusalem.

41[*b*] Cf. *War* II, 505-555.

A reconstruction of the Psephinus tower at the northwest angle of the ancient wall, where it turns west



42[c] *Emmaus route* The road built in the area adjoining the historic pass and ascent of Beth-Horon (II, 546) which led to the western walls and gates of Jerusalem.

43[d] Cf. *War* IV, 632.

45[a] Tiberius Alexander, the Alexandrian governor and a renegade Jew—whose career is noted in *War* II, 220 f.

46[b] He was Titus' chief of staff.

47[c] The camp builders and road makers described in *War* III, 77 ff. This bears comparison with Vespasian's army on the march (III, 115-126).

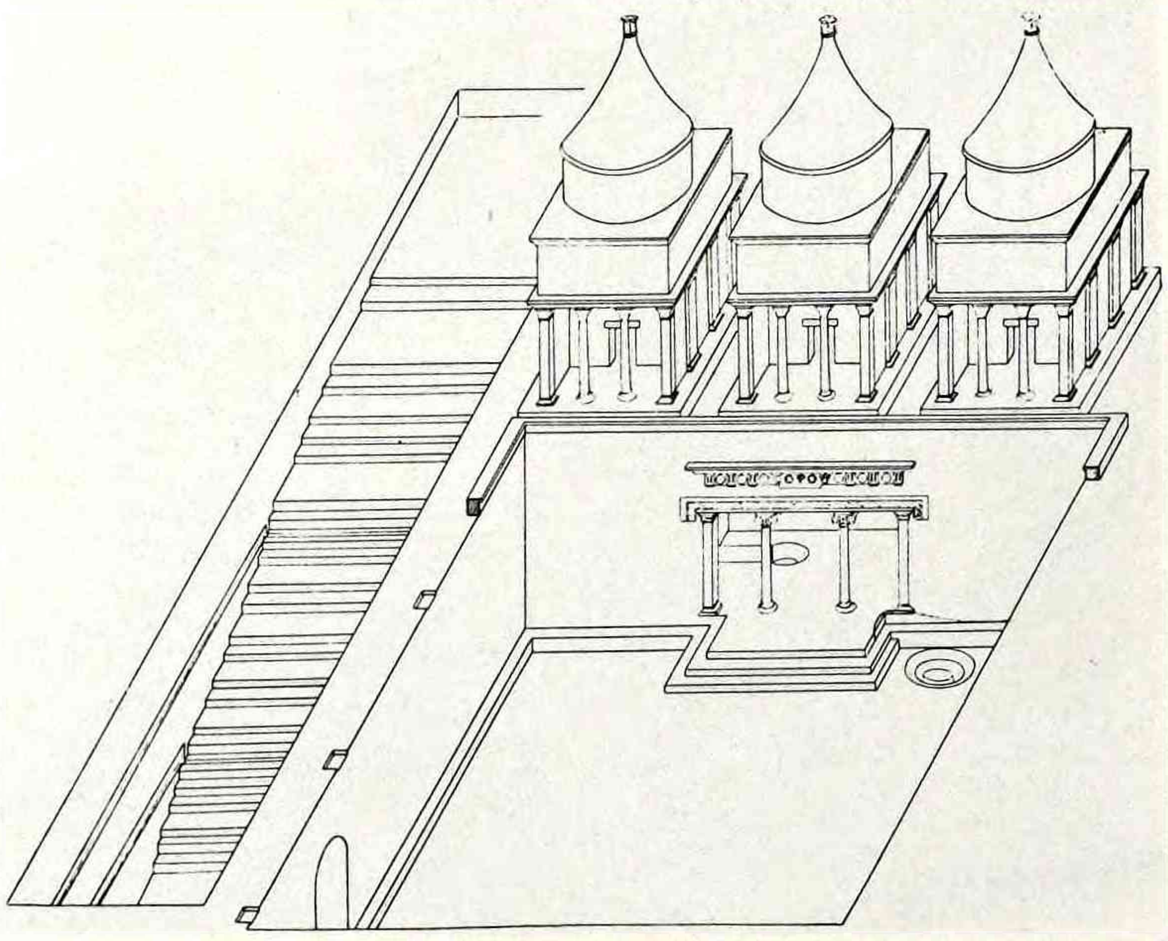
48[a] Some cohorts numbered 500 or 600, and some 1,000.

48[b] Cf. *War* III, 123.

50[c] *Gophna* a town in northern Judaea and some 26 kms north of Jerusalem. This capital of the toparchy by that name was an important stronghold at the outset of the war in AD 66 (*War* II, 566-568) and was subdued by Vespasian's army in 68 (IV, 551). The wooded area had once been a stronghold of the Hasmoneans, in their war of liberation from the Syrians.

51[d] *Gab'at Shaul* the capital of King Saul—Giv'at Shaul in Hebrew (Samuel 22, 6) had been an early Jewish settlement which remained extant through the following millennium. It was apparently destroyed by Titus' army on the march to Jerusalem. Some $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Jerusalem, it is identified with Tell el-Fūl. The "valley of thorns" is situated nearby.

Perspective restoration of the pyramids which topped the Tombs of the Kings of Adiabene, the entrance stairs, court and hall entrance. The tombs lay on the left side



valor and now remembering what it had suffered, advanced the more eagerly to seek revenge. (42) Of these he ordered the fifth to join him via the Emmaus route [*c*], and the tenth to ascend by way of Jericho, while he himself set out with the others, being further attended by the greatly increased contingents from the allied kings and a considerable body of auxiliaries from Syria. (43) The four legions from which Vespasian had selected men to go with Mucianus to Italy [*d*] were brought up to strength with the troops supplied by Titus; (44) he had with him two thousand picked men from the armies in Alexandria and three thousand guards from the Euphrates. (45) With these came a friend of the most tried loyalty and wisdom, Tiberius Alexander [*a*], who had hitherto been administering Egypt in the interests of Titus and his father, (46) and now deemed worthy to command these armies [*b*] because he had been the first to welcome the newly emerging dynasty, and with splendid faith had thrown in his lot with its fortunes when they were still uncertain. Distinguished by age and experience, he now accompanied Titus as a counsellor in the problems of war.

Chapter II

1. Order of the army on the march

(47) Titus advanced into enemy territory behind a vanguard consisting of the contingents of the kings and the whole body of auxiliaries. Next to them came the road-builders and camp-measurers [*c*], then the officers' baggage; behind the troops which protected them came the commander-in-chief, escorted by his lancers and other picked soldiers, and followed by the legionary cavalry. (48) These marched before the engines and behind them the tribunes and prefects of cohorts [*a*] with a picked escort. After them came the eagle surrounded by the standards [*b*], preceded by their trumpeters, and after them the solid column, marching six abreast. (49) The servants belonging to each legion followed in a body preceded by the baggage-train. Last of all came the mercenaries and their guards in the rear. (50) Heading his forces forward in this orderly array, according to Roman custom, Titus advanced through Samaria to Gophna [*c*], previously captured by his father and now garrisoned. Having spent one night there he set off at daybreak, (51) and after marching all day pitched camp in the valley, called by the Jews in their native tongue "Valley of thorns," close to a village called "Gibe'ath Saul" [*d*] meaning "Saul's hill," at a distance of about 30 furlongs [*d*] from Jerusalem. (52) From there, with about six hundred picked horsemen, he rode forward to reconnoiter the strength of the city and then to test the mettle of the Jews, whether on seeing him, they would be terrified into surrender before joining battle; (53) for he had heard that the Jews were

The remains of the massive Western Wall of Temple Mount emphasize the size of its tremendous building stones. The horizontal channel cut in the stone held clay pipes that brought water to the Temple grounds from distant springs

Excavations conducted by B. Mazar below the Southern Wall of Temple Mount

The slopes of the Mount of Olives and village of Siloam

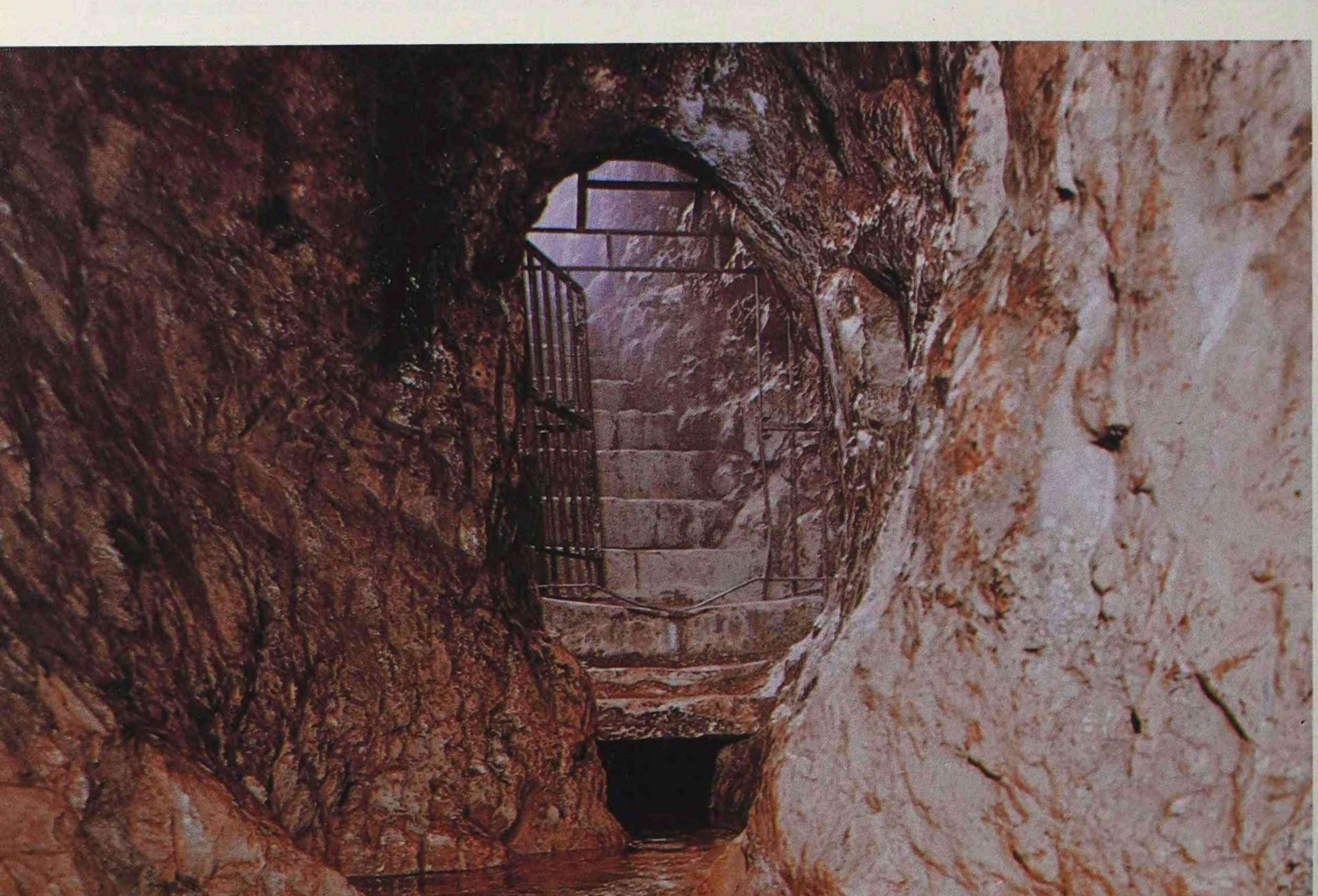
The hills of Galilee

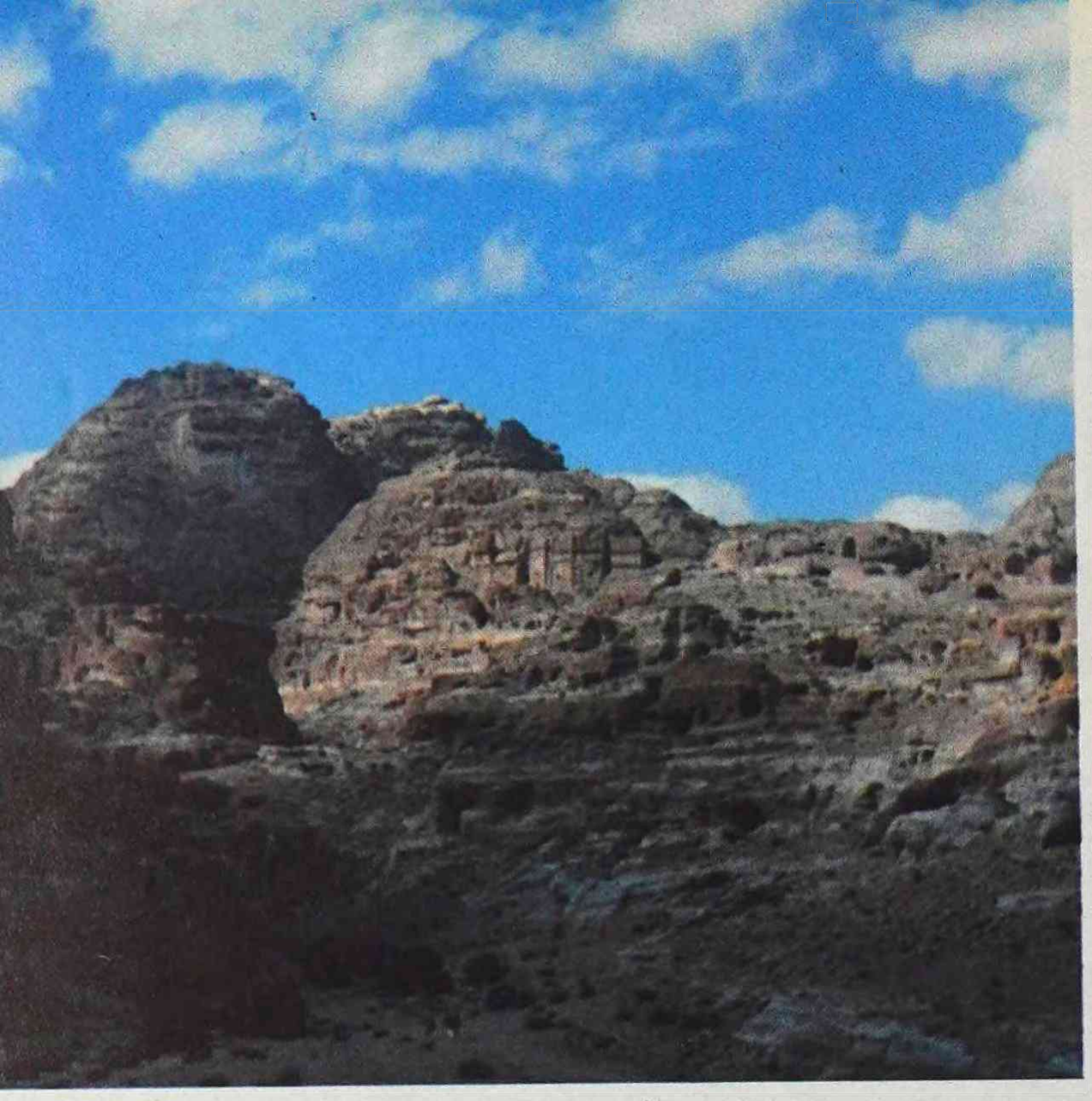
Remains of streets in Jerusalem: Section of the pavement of the Tyropoeon Street abutting the Western Wall of Temple Mount

Stone ornament discovered in the remains of the Temple

The Islamic manner of slaughtering sheep, reminiscent of the ancient Jewish sacrificial rite

The spring of Gihon at the head of the Valley of the Fountain in the Kidron valley



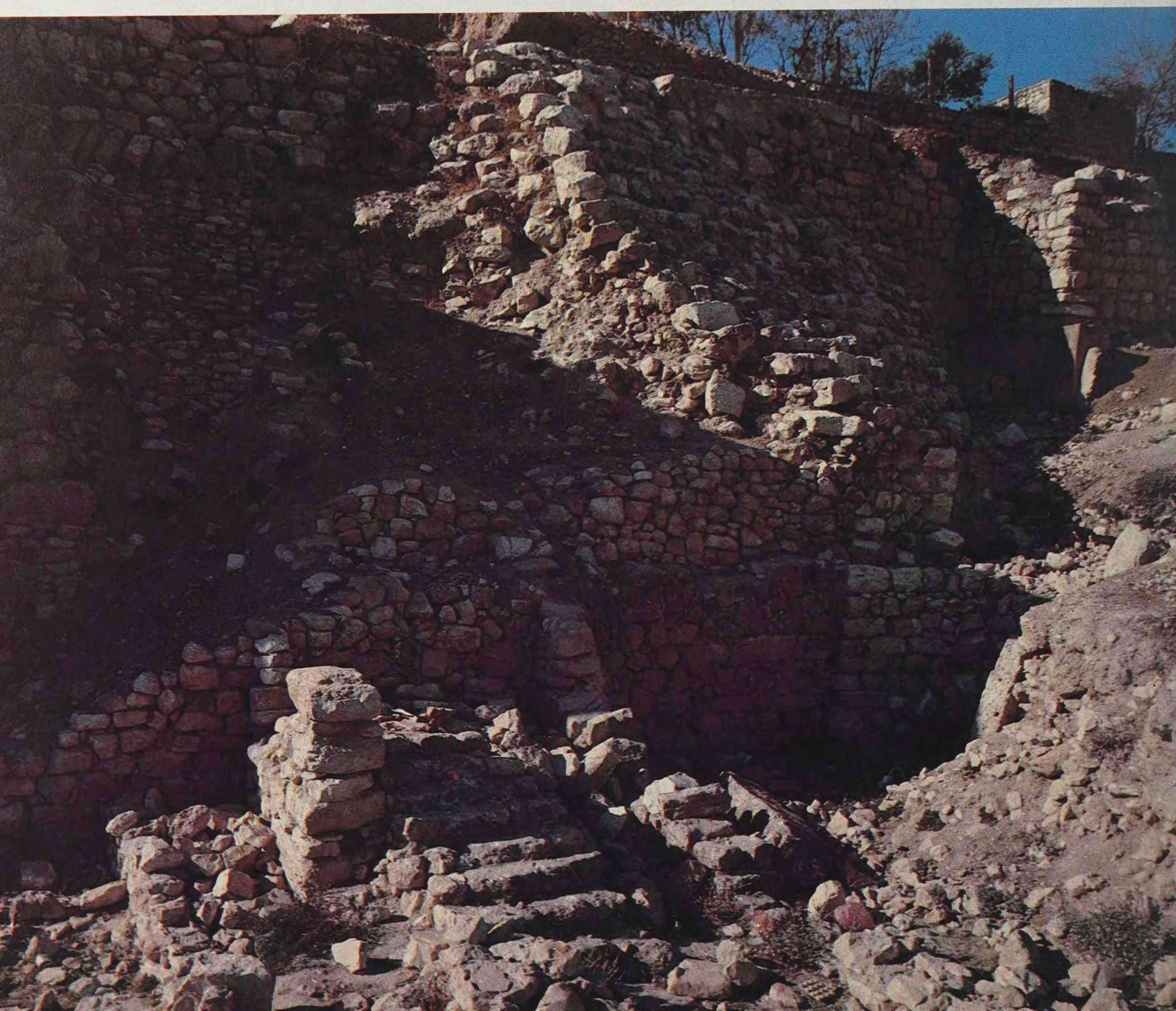


The land of the Idumaeans, who came to the help of the Zealots in Jerusalem

The tombs of Zecharia (right) and Beit-hezir (left) were funeral monuments erected over the tombs of priestly and aristocratic families at the foot of Mount Zion, in the valley of Kidron, and date to the 1st century BC and 1st AD

Below, right: Street in the Upper City of Jerusalem, reconstructed by the Romans after the destruction of Jerusalem

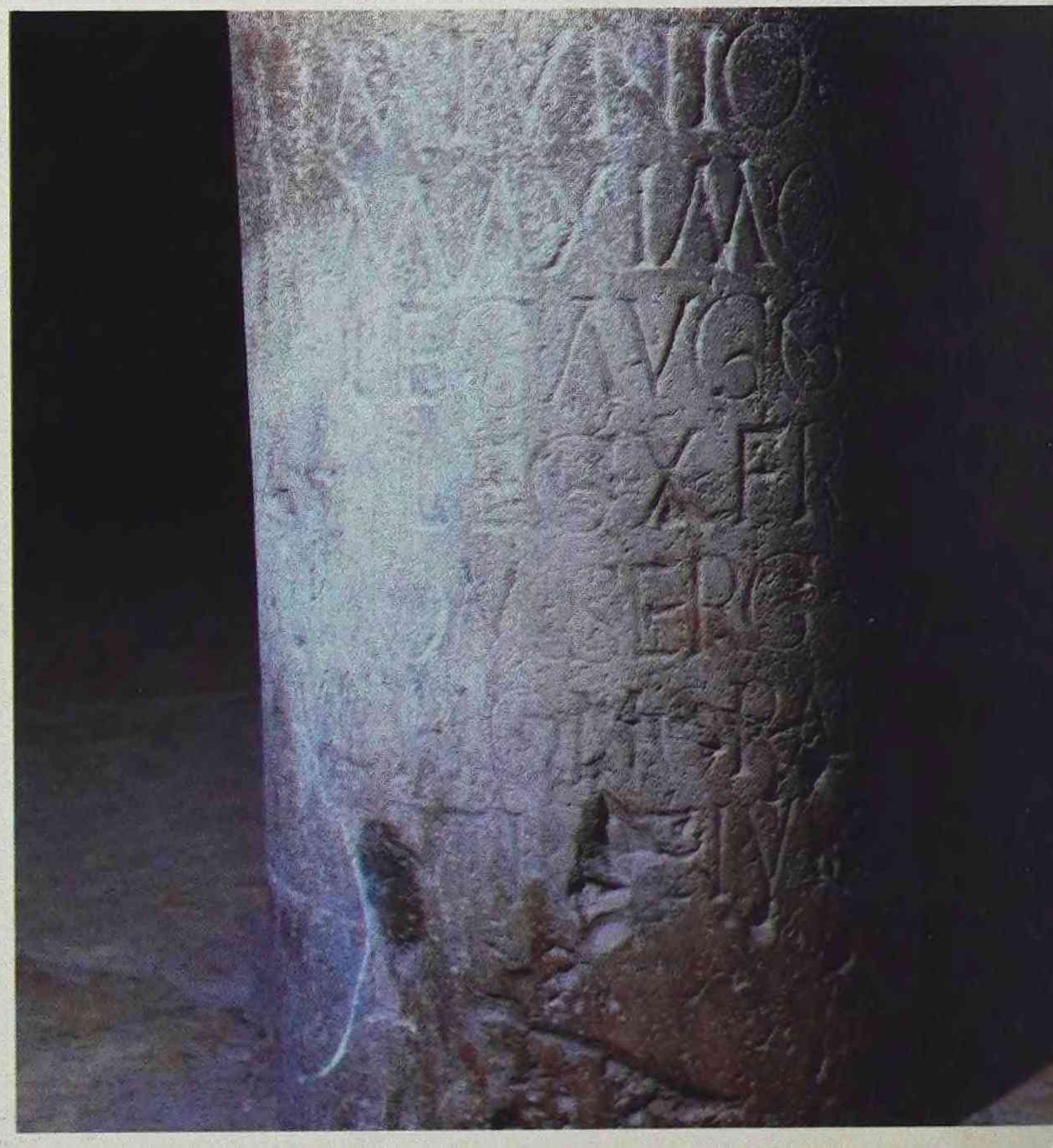
Below: Ruins in the upper Ophel quarter of ancient Jerusalem



Remains of the town of Emmaus and its water installations (cf. V. 42, 68)

The signs of the Zodiac constituted a popular subject of Jewish art. This mosaic, dating to the 5th century AD, was discovered on the floor of a later synagogue at Beth-Alpha

Roman milestone found in Jerusalem



longing for peace, which indeed was the fact, but were overawed by the insurgents and brigands, and kept guard only because they were too weak to rebel.

2. Titus imperiled when he is cut off

(54) As long as he rode straight along the road [*a*] which led to the walls, no one appeared outside the gate; (55) but when he diverged from the road and led his body of horse slantwise towards the Tower Psephinus [*b*], the Jews suddenly dashed out in immense numbers at a spot called "Women's towers" [*c*] through the gate which faced Helena's monuments [*d*], broke through the cavalry, (56) and, lining up in front of those still galloping along the road, prevented them from joining those who had left it, thus cutting Titus off with a handful of men. (57) He could not advance, as all the ground outside the walls was cut up by trenches used for gardening purposes and intersected by cross-walls and numerous fences [*e*]; (58) and to withdraw to his own men, he realized, was impossible with such intervening masses of the enemy in between; and with the withdrawal of his comrades on the highway, most of whom were unaware of the prince's danger, and, believing that he too had turned about as they did, were in full retreat. (59) Titus, seeing that nothing but his prowess could save him, wheeled his horse, and, shouting to his companions to follow, charged into the enemy's midst, struggling to cut his way through to his own men. (60) Then, more than ever, one could deduce that the hazards of war and the perils of princes are in the hands of God; (61) for when a hail of arrows was fired at Titus, who had neither helmet nor cuirass—for he had gone forward, as I said, not to fight but to reconnoiter—not one touched his person, but, as if badly aimed on purpose,

54[*a*] The north-south road which led to the northern gate of the outer Third Wall (see top of map of the siege of Jerusalem).

55[*b*] *The Tower Psephinus* According to Josephus (paras. 150-160 below), it stood at the northwestern corner of the Third Wall (159-160), a site now occupied by the Russian compound (or the highest point of the ridge nearby at a height of about 850 m.; see top left of the map).

55[*c*] *"Women's towers"*—a northern gate in the Third Wall; see map of the siege.

55[*d*] *Helena's monuments* Also mentioned as a landmark in *War* V, 119, 147; see top of the map (Tombs, Kings of Adiabene). Josephus relates that the royal family of Adiabene converted to Judaism and built themselves a palace in the Lower City (VI, 395, etc). North of the Third Wall they quarried a structure of great magnificence to serve as the burial place of the family to realize a lifelong dream to live and die and then be buried in the Holy City. According to Josephus (*Antiq.* XX. 95), the tomb was surmounted by three pyramids *(the nephesh)* and was famous through the ancient world for the wealth of its architectural and artistic embellishments; it was cited by the Greek writer Pausanias (2nd century AD) as one of the most glorious monuments of its kind in the world. Its pyramids were still standing in the 5th century AD. A wide, descending stairway, with water tunnels along the side, leads to a cistern used for ritual purposes. The broad rock-cut wide forecourt and the once columned vestibule of the tomb itself are of monumental proportions, and are decorated with relief carvings of wreaths and grape clusters peculiar to Jerusalem art in Herodian times. At the southwestern corner of the vestibule is the entrance to thirty rock-cut chambers and niches. The entrance was sealed by a rolling stone still to be seen there. The dead were buried singly, in most ornate and sealed limestone coffins known as sarcophagi, and among them, in a sepulchral chamber, the coffin with a bilingual inscription: "SDNMLKT (Zadan Malkata in Aramaic) and SDHMLKTH (Zada Malkata in a Syriac dialect) meaning 'Queen Sadda(n)' "; dialectic reasons account for the discrepancy in spellings.

57[*e*] They were stone fences and a considerable obstacle in the fighting.

Sarcophagus of the queen of Adiabene, marked Sadan Malkata

63[*a*] *Titus the hero* Josephus surpassed himself in stressing Titus' heroism, even referring to him as "Caesar.". It must be remembered that he wrote *War* in Rome as a respected protégé of Rome. Other deeds of Titus are described by Suetonius (*Titus*, 4). On one occasion Titus' horse stumbled in battle, whereupon he dashed in full flight and mounted another horse whose rider had been felled. Cf. 84, 87 ff below.

67[*b*] The Vth legion (cf. 42) which was engaged later in the attack on the western wall of the city. The legions coming through the northern and western routes to Jerusalem were scheduled to attack the more accessible walls of the city facing them; the other southern and eastern approaches to Jerusalem were inaccessible to attack.

67[*c*] *Scopus* Look-out place (*Skofia* in Greek) was near the site where Cestius Gallus had encamped four years earlier (see *War* II, and note to 528). The camping site of the XIIth and XVth is not identical with the present campus of the Hebrew University east of the city, but is situated in a more northwesterly direction, to the west of the present northern road (the present upper Sheikh Jarrah quarter), and likewise commanding a sweeping view of Jerusalem (see map of the siege).

every spear whizzed past harmlessly. (62) Meanwhile, he with his sword constantly dispersed those on his flank and, striking down many who withstood him from the front, rode his horse over the fallen foes. (63) At Caesar's courage [*a*] the Jews shouted and cheered each other on against him, but whenever he turned his horse, his opponents fled and stampeded. (64) His comrades who shared his peril closed up to him, assailed as they were in rear and flank; for each man's only hope of escape lay in pushing through with Titus before he was encircled. (65) Two indeed were further off than the rest: one of these was surrounded with his horse and speared, the other was killed after dismounting and his horse led away; with the remainder Titus got through safely to his camp. (66) The Jews who had thus succeeded in their first attack were elated with unreasoning hopes, and this fleeting turn of fortune gave them high confidence in the future.

3. Titus' encampment on Mount Scopus

(67) During the night Caesar was joined by the legion from Emmaus [*b*]. He broke up his camp and marched to Scopus [*c*], as the place is called, from which could be seen the first view of the city and the grand mass of the Temple gleaming from afar; hence the appropriate name Scopus for this slight eminence which joined the northern quarter of the city. (68)

Air view of the city of Jerusalem from the west. The city's ancient sites lie buried under the visible structures. Some have been excavated, as will be illustrated in this Book and in Book VI

Here, at a distance of seven furlongs [*d*] from the city, he ordered one combined camp to be formed for the two legions [*e*] and the fifth to be stationed three furlongs [*f*] to the rear, considering that men tired out by a night's march deserved to be screened from molestation while they were entrenching. (69) As soon as they began their task, the tenth legion arrived from Jericho, where a body of soldiers had been stationed to guard the pass previously occupied by Vespasian [*a*]. (70) These troops were ordered to encamp at a distance of six furlongs [*b*] from Jerusalem at the elevation called Mount of Olives, which faces the city on the east and is separated from it by a deep intervening ravine called Kidron [*b*].

68[*d*] 7 furlongs—approx. 1,2 kms.

68[*e*] The twelfth and fifth, cf. 42.

68[*f*] 3 furlongs—550 M. *The fifth legion from Emmaus* The inscriptions of soldiers of the fifth legion discovered at Emmaus may derive from that period. On all three, the man in question is termed ("mil[es] leg[ionis] V Mac[edonicae]").

69[*a*] Vespasian had established a camp with a permanent garrison at Jericho; it was a favorite winter camp and resort.

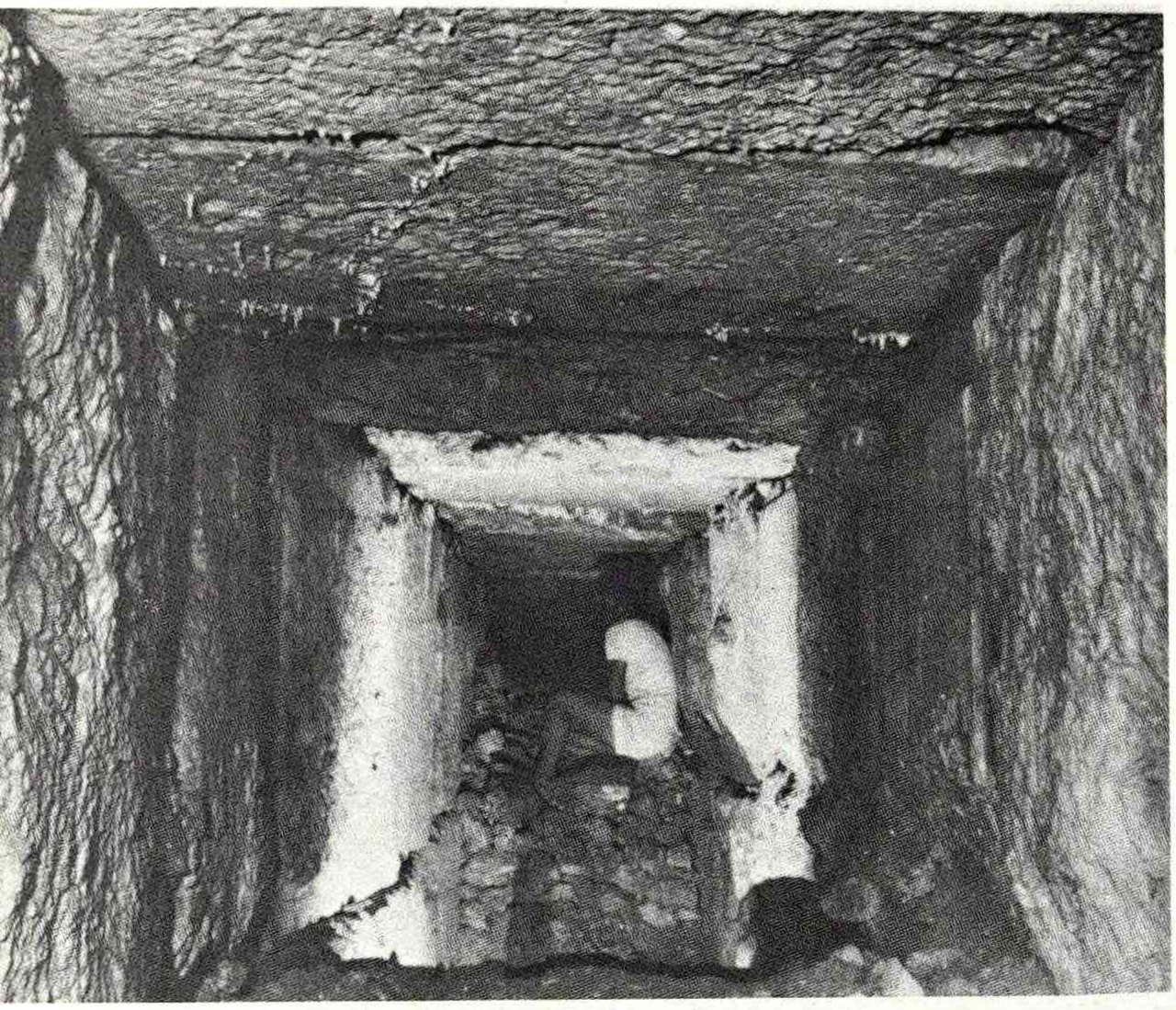
70[*b*] The Mount of Olives, a mile east of Jerusalem across the Kidron valley, commands an unforgettable view of the Holy City. The terrain of the Kidron ravine was rugged, wet, and slippery before Passover (Easter).

4. The Zealot factions' joint forces and rout of the tenth legion

(71) And now for the first time the warring factions within the city put an end to their incessant strife by the war which suddenly descended on them in full force. (72) The rival parties, seeing with consternation the Romans building three separate camps, made an unholy alliance and began asking each other (73) what they were waiting for, and what possessed them to let themselves be suffocated by the erection of three fortifications; the enemy unmolested was building himself a rival city, while they sat behind their ramparts, like spectators of excellent and advantageous operations, hands and weapons idle! (74) "Are we courageous only against ourselves," they exclaimed, "while the Romans, as a result of our party quarrels, make a bloodless conquest of the city?" (75) Urging each other on in this way and uniting forces, they seized their weapons, dashed out suddenly against the tenth legion, raced across the ravine with terrific shouts, and fell upon the enemy who were erecting fortifications. (76) The latter, to facilitate their labor, had dispersed into groups, and had set aside most of their arms, never imagining that the Jews would dare to sally out or, that, if they were disposed to do so, their efforts would be weakened by their dissensions. (77) As a result they were taken by surprise and thrown into disorder. Abandoning their work, some promptly retreated; many rushed for their arms but were struck down before they could turn and face the foe. (78) The number of Jews was constantly being reinforced by others who were encouraged by the success of the first party, and with fortune favoring them, seemed both to themselves and to the enemy far in excess of their actual numbers. (79) Moreover, men used to discipline and proficient in fighting in orderly ranks and by word of command are demoralized when suddenly confronted with disorderly warfare. So on this occasion too, the Romans, taken by surprise, gave way before the onslaught. (80) Whenever some of them were overtaken they faced about, checked the Jewish rush, and wounded many who were off their guard in the ardor of pursuit; but as more Jews sallied forth from the

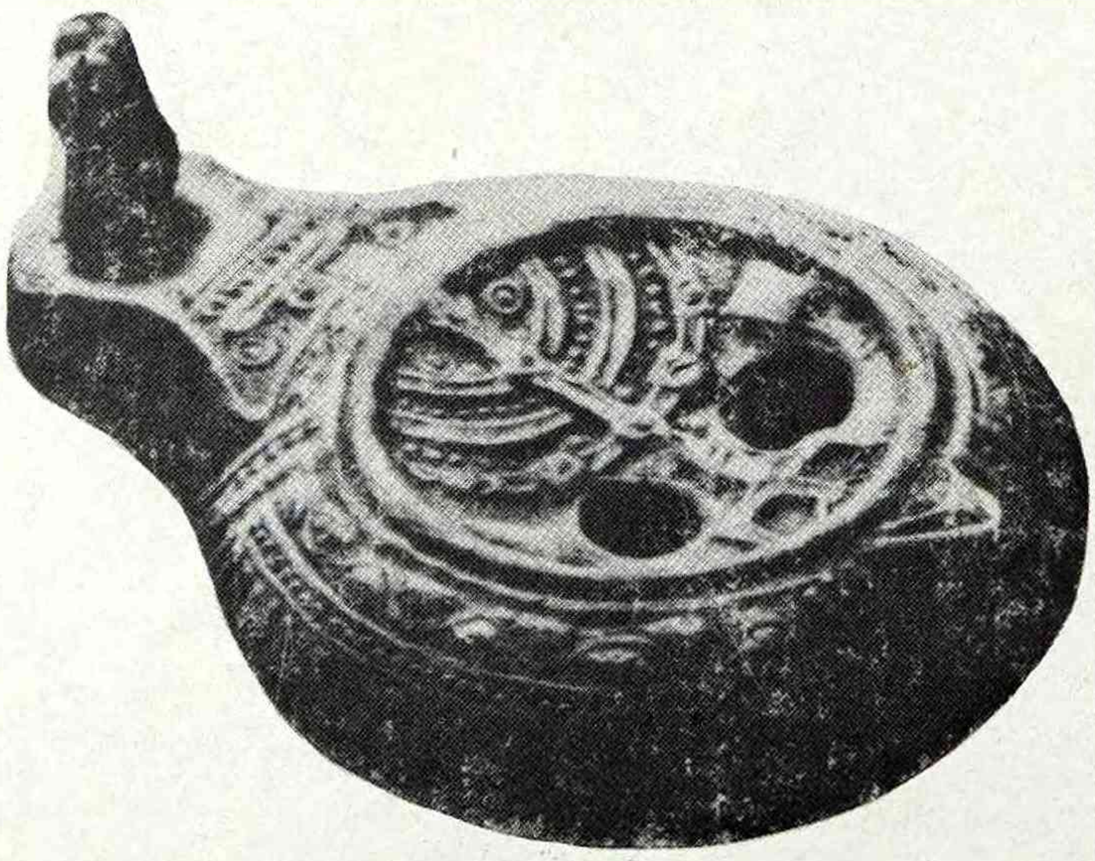
The ravine (called "brook") mentioned in para. 83 lay between Mount Scopus (and the adjoining Mount of Olives) on the right, and the walled city on the left

86[*a*] *Engine,* as if bursting from a Roman artillery engine.
88[*b*] As indicated in 63[*a*]. Titus is singled out for his personal prowess in saving the Roman troops on two memorable occasions; he was therefore compared to a favorite of Fortune.



An underground corridor below the level of the Single gate at the southeastern corner (below the Corner Angle of the Temple Mount). The existence of the corridor indicates that there were tiers below the "Master Course" of the retaining walls supporting the gates leading to the upper courts. This lends support to Josephus' estimate of the great depth of the southeastern corner under the "Angle of the Ophel" (Matthew 4, 5)

Oil wick lamps, placed in niches of rooms and underground passages



city, the confusion of the Romans grew until they were at last chased from their camp.

The Jewish attack repulsed by Titus

(81) Indeed, it is likely that the situation of the entire legion would have become precarious had not Titus, hearing of their position, instantly come to their aid; vehemently chiding them for their cowardice, he rallied the fugitives and then, (82) falling upon the Jews in the flank with his picked men, he killed many, wounded more, routed the whole body and drove them headlong down into the ravine. (83) They suffered severely on the downward slope, but when they had reached the other bank they turned about to face the Romans and, with the ravine between them, renewed the combat. (84) So the battle raged till midday; and then shortly after noon, Titus, to check further sallies, deployed the reinforcements he had brought together with the men from the cohorts, and sent the rest of the legion to the hill to resume their fortifications.

5. Fresh Jewish charge on the Mount of Olives and its repulse

(85) The Jews, however, mistook this move for a rout, and when the watchman posted on the wall signalled by shaking his cloak, another crowd, quite fresh, sprang forth with such ferocity that it was like the charge of the most savage of beasts. (86) Indeed, not one of their opponents awaited their charge, but as if struck by an engine [*a*], they broke their ranks and turned and fled up the hillside, leaving Titus with a handful of men halfway up the slope. (87) The friends who in loyalty to their commander-in-chief stood firm, indifferent to danger, (88) strongly urged him to retire before these Jews who courted death, and not to risk his life before men whose duty was to stay and defend him, but to bear in mind his unique fortune [*b*] and not play the part of a common soldier, when he was lord both of the war and of the world. (89) Titus appeared not even to hear these advisers, but stood his ground against the Jews who were rushing at him up the hill and, confronted, struck, and slew them as they attacked him; then, falling on the masses behind, drove them in a body down the slope. (90) Yet, though his amazing courage and strength terrified them, they did not retreat into the city, but, opening up in both directions to avoid him, continued their pursuit of those who were flying up the hill; whereupon he attacked their flank and endeavored to check their attack. (91) Meanwhile, the troops who were constructing the camp above, seeing their comrades below in flight, were themselves once more filled with such consternation and alarm that the whole legion scattered; (92) for they thought that the Jewish charge was irresistible and that Titus himself had been put to flight, because the others surely would never have fled while he held his ground. (93) Like men in the grip of panic, they

ran in all directions, until some caught sight of their general in the thick of the fight, and in great fear for his safety shouted to the whole legion to tell them of his danger. (94) Shame rallied them, and reproaching each other less for their flight than for their desertion of Caesar, they assailed the Jews fiercely and forcibly pushed them off the slope and into the valley. (95) The Jews retreated step by step fighting, but the Romans who enjoyed the advantage of higher position, drove them all into the ravine. (96) Titus kept up the pressure on those in front of him, sending the legion back to resume their fortifications, while he, with his former band [*c*], withstood the enemy advance. (97) Thus, if truth must be told without flattering exaggeration or subtracting anything from envy, it was Caesar himself who personally twice saved the whole legion when in jeopardy, and enabled them to entrench themselves in their camp in safety [*d*].

Chapter III

1. John of Gischala's entry to the inner Temple by ruse

(98) During a momentary respite from the war outside the walls, internal dissension was renewed inside. (99) When the day of unleavened bread arrived on the fourteenth day of Xanthicus [*a*], the traditional anniversary of the Jews' first liberation from Egypt [*b*], Eleazar and his men partly opened the gates [*c*] to admit citizens who wished to worship inside the building. (100) But John, using the feast to screen his treacherous intentions, armed with concealed weapons the less conspicuous of his followers—most of them unpurified—and thus managed to get them stealthily into the Temple with orders to seize it. Once inside, they whipped off their disguise, and were suddenly revealed as armed men. (101) Utter disorder and confusion at once reigned throughout the environs of the sanctuary as the people who were not involved in the party strife felt that an indiscriminate attack was directed upon all, while the Zealots regarded the assault as directed against themselves. (102) The latter, therefore, abandoned their watch over the gates and, without waiting to come to close quarters with the intruders, leaped down from the battlements and took refuge in the Temple vaults [*a*]. The visitors from the city who cowered beside the altar and crowded around the sanctuary were trampled on and mercilessly struck with clubs and swords. (103) Many peaceable citizens, the innocent victims of private animosity and hatred, were taken for rival partisans of the opposite faction and slain; and any man who in the past had offended one of the conspirators was now regarded as a Zealot and led off to cruel punishment. (104) But while the innocent were thus brutally treated, the intruders granted a truce to the guilty, and let them go when they emerged from the vaults. Now that they were in possession of the inner courts of the

96[*c*] Cf. 82

97[*d*] Cf. 88[*b*].

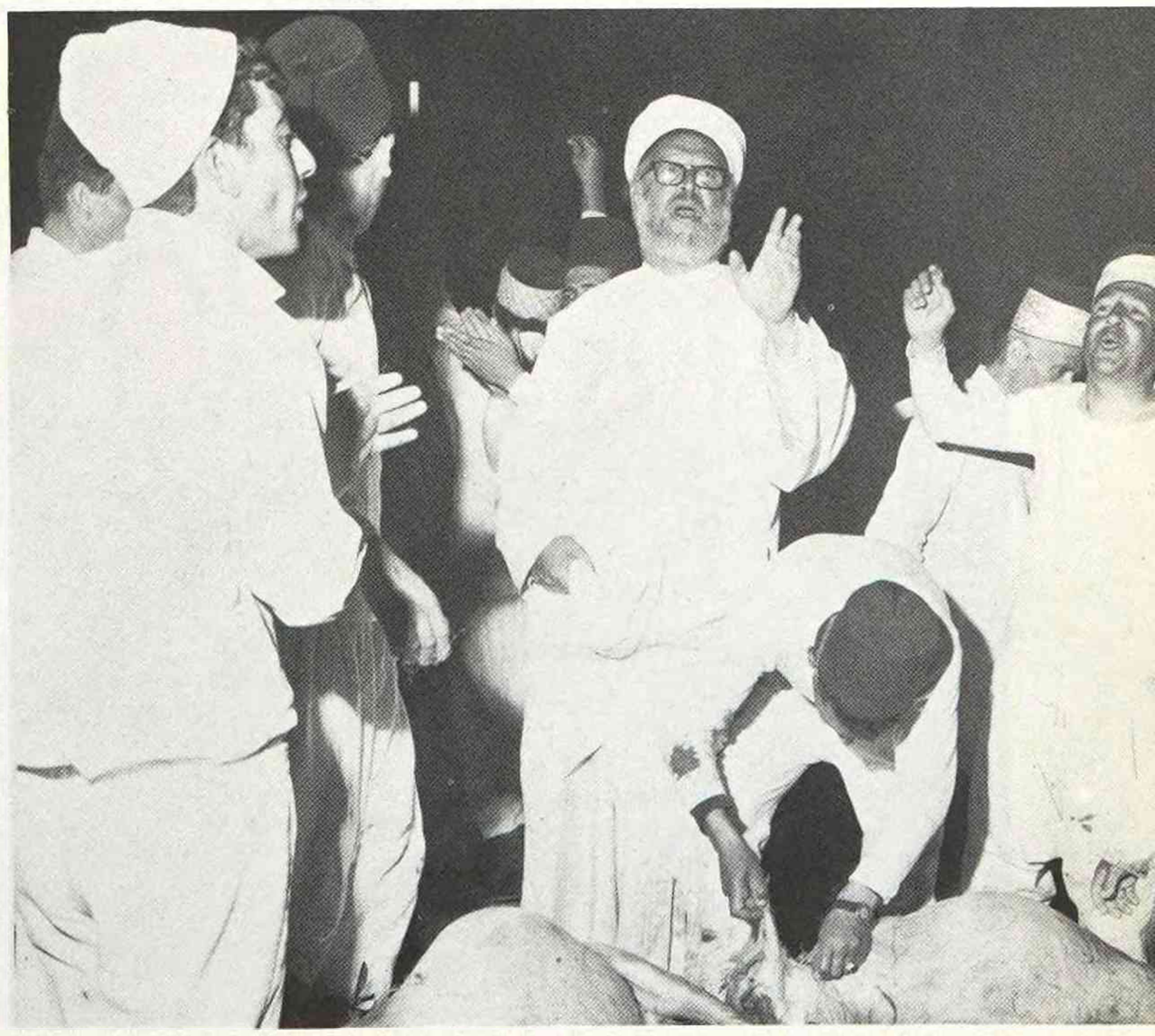
99[*a*] 14th Xanthicus corresponds to the Hebrew 14th of Nissan (April) when the special feature of Passover in the Temple was the slaughter of the paschal lamb by all worshipers, inhabitants of Jerusalem and pilgrims alike. The people, numbering tens of thousands, filled the court three times. When one group completed their share of the slaughter, the gates were opened and the second group entered, and so forth. In order to insure sufficient time for all the individual and group offerings, the Temple gates were opened to the people at midnight, and before dawn the Temple courts were already filled with Israelites (*Pesahim* 4, 1-2; Pal.Tal. *Pes.* 6, 33; T.B.Pes. 66).

99[*b*] The first liberation, namely from Egypt, to differentiate it from the second liberation from Babylon some seven centuries later.

99[*c*] The pressure of the celebrants at the gates, as explained in 99[*a*] above, gave Eleazar a chance to try new tactics. He ordered his men to appear early to avoid surprises.

102[*a*] *Vaults* Underground tunnels and vaults are known to have led through subterranean sections of the inner courts to the Chamber of Ritual Immersion *(Bēt Hatvīla),* to rest chambers for the priests in attendance and to underground exits. The dark recesses of such *Messības* were lit by oil lamps placed in niches on both sides (*Mishna, Tamid* 1, 1; *Middot* 1, 9; *Baraita Pesachim* 86, 71). An underground passage, as illustrated, was discovered in the course of recent excavations conducted by B. Mazar beneath the "Single Gate" in the southern wall of the Temple Mount, below the level of the so-called Solomon Stables (actually the ancient stores and sacrificial animal pens of the Temple). The underground passage is a very significant archaeological link with Herod's Temple, as described in *Mountain of the Lord:* "The entrance to the passage is 112 feet (34 meters) west of the southern corner of the area. It is 69 feet (21 meters) long, three feet (1 meter) wide, and 11.5 feet (3.5 meters) high, as illustrated. The passage was certainly built together with the massive southern supporting wall of the Temple Mount and is constructed of stones carved in Herodian style... The end of the passage at its northern extremity is a doorway which probably leads to a hall lying below the so-called Solomon Stables" (p. 128, 1975). Moreover, a number of underground halls and chambers are known to have existed under the wide esplanade of the Temple Mount, the present Muslim Haram-es-Sherif, then sealed at a later time and used as water reservoirs (see map of reservoirs, on page 317 marked 1–37).

The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Pessah or Passover) was characterized by offerings of sheep. The custom is perpetuated by the Jewish Samaritan sectaries, whose descendants still live in Shechem (Nablus), and Holon near Tel Aviv



108[*a*] As the fifth legion encamped on the hill facing the western city walls, it is assumed that "Herod's monuments" means Herod's palace, sumptuous gardens and arcades on Mount Zion, situated just behind and west of these walls (cf. V, 177-183).

108[*b*] *Serpents' pool*, presumed to be the present *Birket-el-Sultan* situated in the vale west of Herod's family tomb and facing the western city wall. The city's periphery at this point is called the "suburb."

110[*c*] *Women's Towers* The northern gate of the Third Wall. Cf. 55c.

116[*d*] The gateway towers refer apparently to the Women's towers (110[*c*]).

119[*e*] *Tomb of Helena* cf. 55[*d*] above and *War* II, 520.

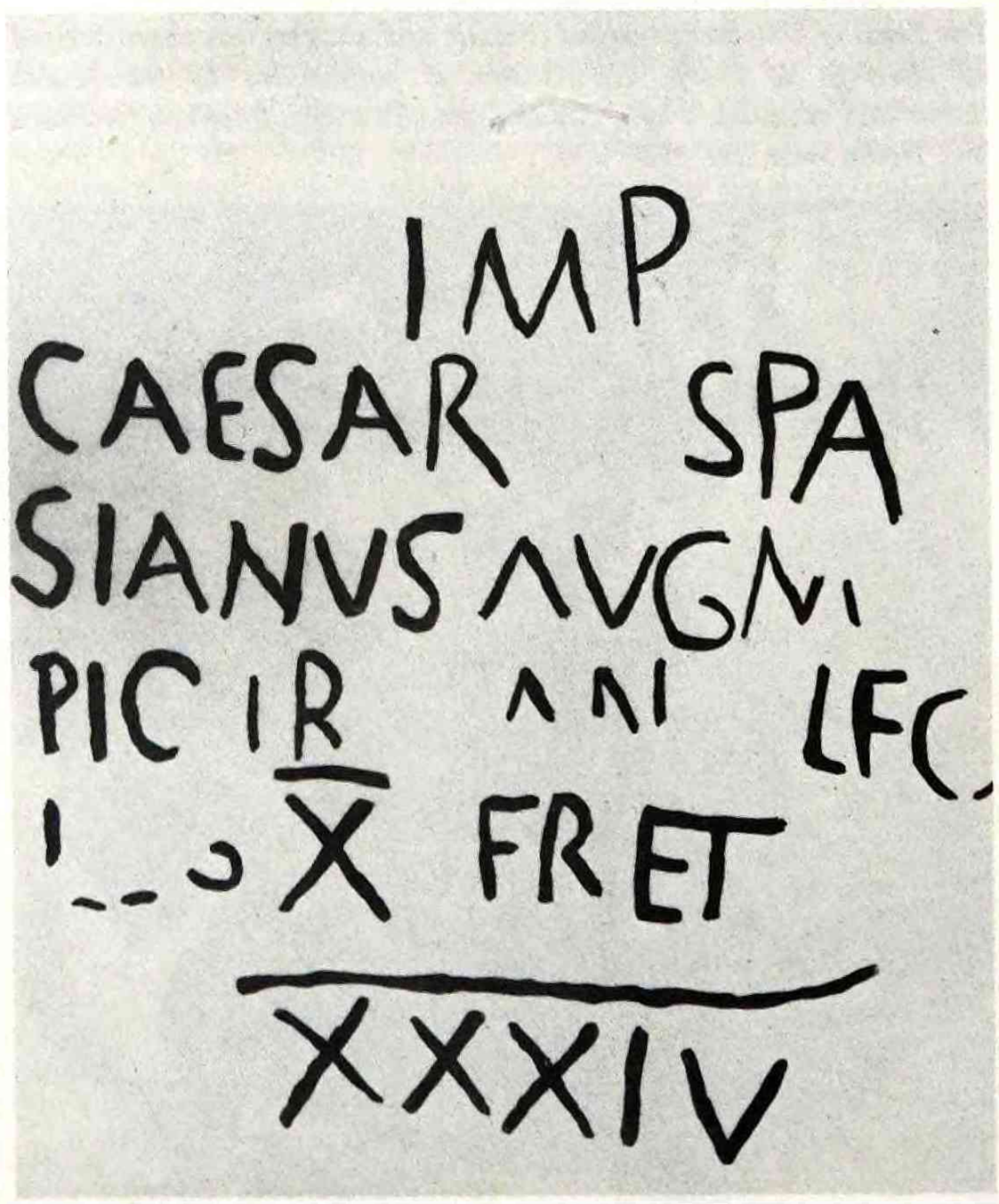
130[*a*] Namely in the position noted in 108[*a*], 108[*b*], 110[*c*]. See map.

133[*a*] *Two furlongs*—approx. 370 m. While the Jews could heretofore deploy their sallies and attacks over a wide perimeter around Jerusalem, they were now hemmed in by the Roman encampments built as close as 400 m. as well as the deep formation of Titus' forces between them and the walls.

133[*b*] Cf. V, 55[*b*].

134[*c*] *Hippicus* A tower in the western Hasmonean city ramparts, later one of the three fortresses Herod erected in strategic triangular formation at the Citadel (*War* II, 439). Hippicus faced northwest and formed the link between the two arms of the First Wall of the city (see center of siege map). In other words, one single wall was enough to defend the city on those sides which were surrounded by steep-sided valleys. It is easy to identify the deep valleys which surrounded the city. The one on the west and the south is the Valley of Hinnom; the second is the Kidron valley, which enclosed part of the northern and the whole of the eastern side of the city. Both together formed a most effective defense for about three quarters of the whole circumference. The other quarter, namely the north, provided no effective defense and was therefore vulnerable.

Roman milestone mentioning Caesar Vespasian, found at Afulah, Israel



Temple and all the supplies that it contained, the invaders could defy Simon. (105) Consequently, the situation which had been a three-cornered fight, once again became a struggle between two factions.

2. Titus' leveling of the ground between Mount Scopus and the city walls; a Jewish ruse and Roman defection

(106) Titus, now decided to abandon Mount Scopus and to encamp closer to the city, posted what he considered an adequate body of horse and foot to stop any sorties, and gave orders to the rest of his forces to level the intervening ground as far as the city walls. (107) Every fence and palisade that the inhabitants had erected around their gardens and orchards was swept away, every fruit tree within the area pulled up, every dip and hollow filled in; (108) the rocky projections were demolished with iron implements, and the whole space leveled from Scopus to Herod's monuments [*a*] which adjoined the spot called the Serpent's Pool [*b*].

3. (109) At this stage the Jews devised the following ruse to deceive the Romans. (110) The bolder insurgents, streaming from the so-called Women's towers [*c*], as though they had been expelled by the partisans of peace and dreaded an attack by the Romans, huddled together in a cowering mass. (111) Meanwhile others, who lined the walls and pretended to be ordinary citizens, clamoring "Peace," pleaded for protection and invited the Romans to enter, promising to open the gates; they accompanied these cries with showers of stones which they pelted at their own men, as if to drive them from the gates. (112) The latter feigned a forced entry, appealing to the men inside, and continually rushing towards the Romans, and then they would retreat, apparently in panic. (113) The Roman rank and file was taken off its guard by this strategy, thinking that they had one group at their mercy to be punished at will, and that the others would open the city. They were ready at this point to move in. (114) Titus, however, viewed this surprising invitation with suspicion. Only on the previous day he had, through Josephus, invited them to come to negotiate terms, and had met with no reasonable answer; so now he ordered his soldiers to stay where they were. (115) However, some of the men who were positioned in front of the works had already seized their arms and made an assault upon the gates without awaiting orders. (116) Those who apparently had been expelled at first retreated, but when the Romans came between the gateway towers [*d*], the Jews sallied out, surrounded them and attacked them from the rear, (117) while those on the wall showered them with a hail of stones and missiles of every kind, killing many and wounding most. (118) For it was not easy to escape from the wall under pressure from the rear, and besides, shame at their blunder and dread of their

officers forced them to persist stubbornly in their error. (119) Consequently, it was only after keeping up the fight with spears, suffering severe injuries at the hands of the Jews—inflicting, of course, no fewer in return—that they finally drove back their encircling enemy. But even as they retired, the Jews pursued them and kept them under attack as far as the Tomb of Helena [*e*].

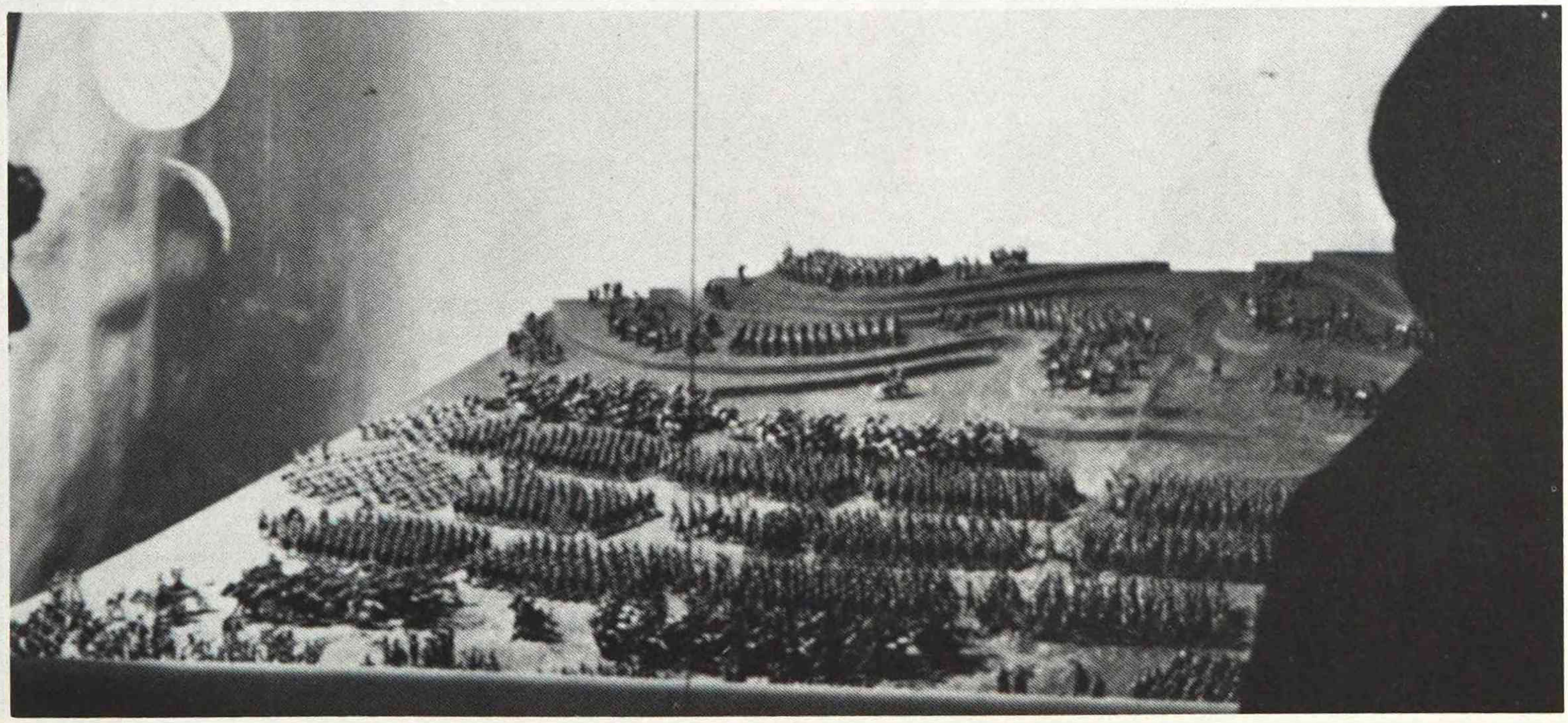
4. Titus' reprimand of insubordinate soldiers

(120) Then, because of their success, the Jews mocked the Romans with vulgar abuse for being taken in by a ruse, and, brandishing their shields, danced and yelled with delight. (121) Meanwhile, the soldiers were received with threats by their officers and an angry Caesar. "These Jews," he said, "with only despair to lead them do everything with premeditation and caution; they plan stratagems and ambushes with every care, and their devices are crowned with success because of their mutual trust and loyalty; (122) while the Romans, whose orderly discipline and obedience can always command success, are now brought to grief by their contrary behavior and defeated through their uncontrollable pugnacity, and—as a crowning disgrace—by fighting without a leader under the eyes of Caesar! (123) What a blow to the standards of military discipline! And deeply too will my father groan when he hears of this defeat; (124) for he, though grown gray in warfare, never met with a like disaster, and the laws always punish with death those guilty of the slightest breach of discipline, whereas now they have seen a whole corps quit the ranks! (125) However, these reckless adventurers shall learn forthwith that, among Romans, even victory, if won against orders, is held dishonorable." (126) With such determined language to his officers it seemed evident that Titus intended to enforce the law. The offenders, accordingly, abandoned all hope, expecting to die immediately, as they deserved; (127) but the legions flocked around Titus and pleaded for their comrades, begging him, in consideration of the obedience of them all, to overlook the recklessness of a few, also assuring him that they would correct their present blunder by future meritorious deeds.

5. The encamping of two divisions nearer the walls

(128) Caesar yielded to these entreaties and to expediency; for the thought that while an individual punishment could actually be carried out, collective punishment should not go beyond reproof. (129) He was therefore reconciled with the soldiers, after warning them emphatically to be wiser in the future; and at the same time, he considered privately how best to avenge himself on the Jews for their stratagem. (130) In four days all the intervening ground as far as the walls was leveled, and Titus, wishing to ensure the safety of his baggage-train and train of followers, deployed the flower of his forces opposite the northern and western sections of the walls [*a*] in a formation seven deep: (131) the infantry drawn up in front, the cavalry behind, each of these arms in three ranks, with the archers forming a seventh line in the middle. (132) This formidable concentration put a stop to Jewish sallies, and the beasts of burden of the three legions with their train of followers marched securely on. (133) Titus himself pitched his camp about two furlongs [*a*] from the ramparts, at the angle opposite the tower called Psephinus [*b*], where the wall bends back from the north to the west. (134) The other section of the army entrenched itself opposite the tower known as Hippicus [*c*], likewise at a distance of two furlongs from the city. (135) The tenth legion remained on the Mount of Olives.

Roman troops paraded in formations that resembled maneuvers and were deployed as troops engaged in actual battle formation



Foreground of the Old City showing the Citadel and its forts. Phasael stands between the two towers flanking it on both sides. The Temple Mount esplanade and its Dome of the Rock appear in the background and, higher up, the Mount of Olives and Mount Scopus

B. DESCRIPTION OF JERUSALEM

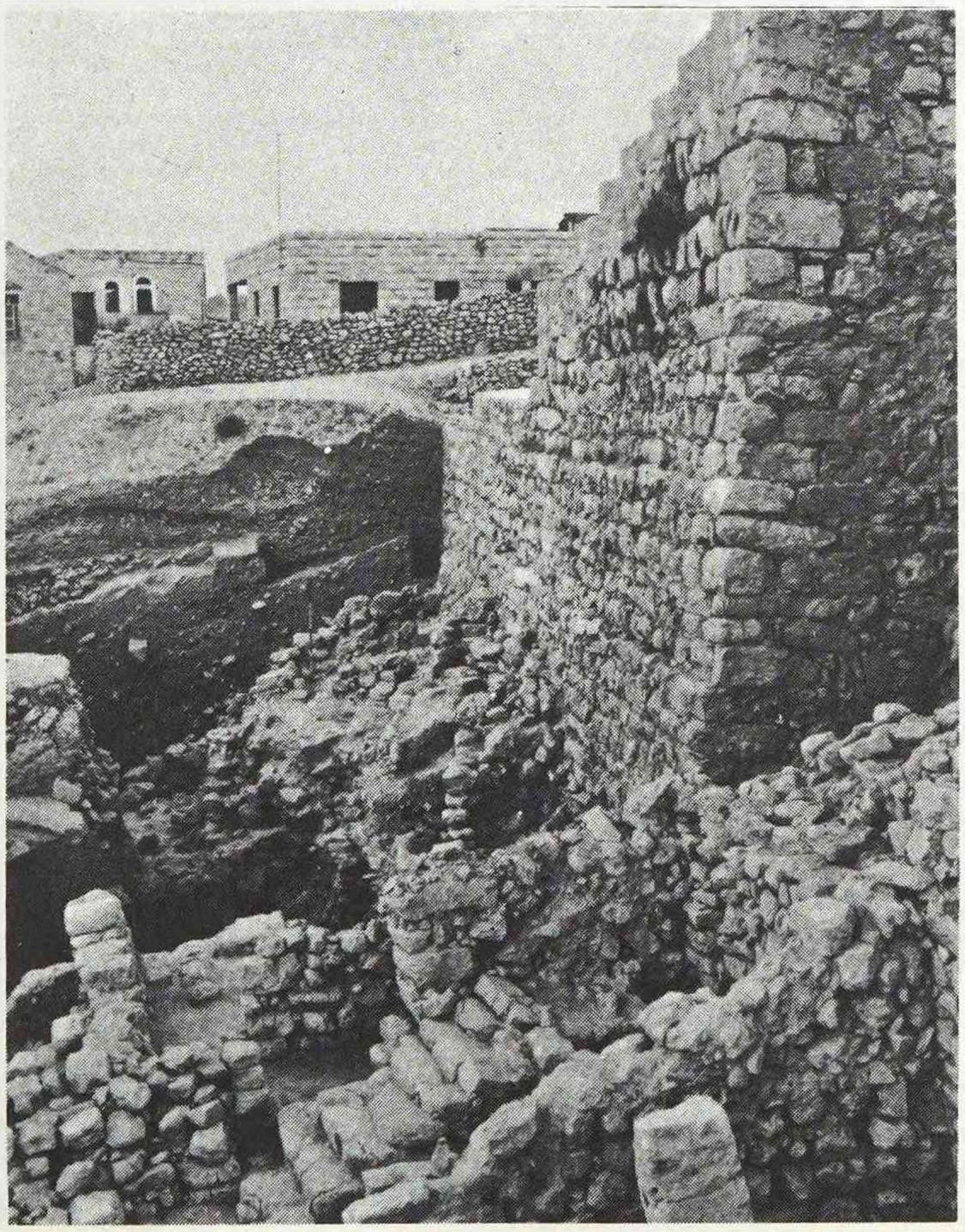
Chapter IV

1. (136) The city was defended by three walls, except where it was encompassed by impassable ravines [*a*], where a single rampart sufficed. It was built on two hills facing each other and separated by a central valley [*b*] where the tiers of houses ended.

The two main hills

(137) Of these hills the one occupied by the Upper City was far higher and had a straighter ridge than the other [*a*], and because of its strength it was called the stronghold [*b*] by King David—father of Solomon

An ancient Hasmonean stronghold above the Kidron valley



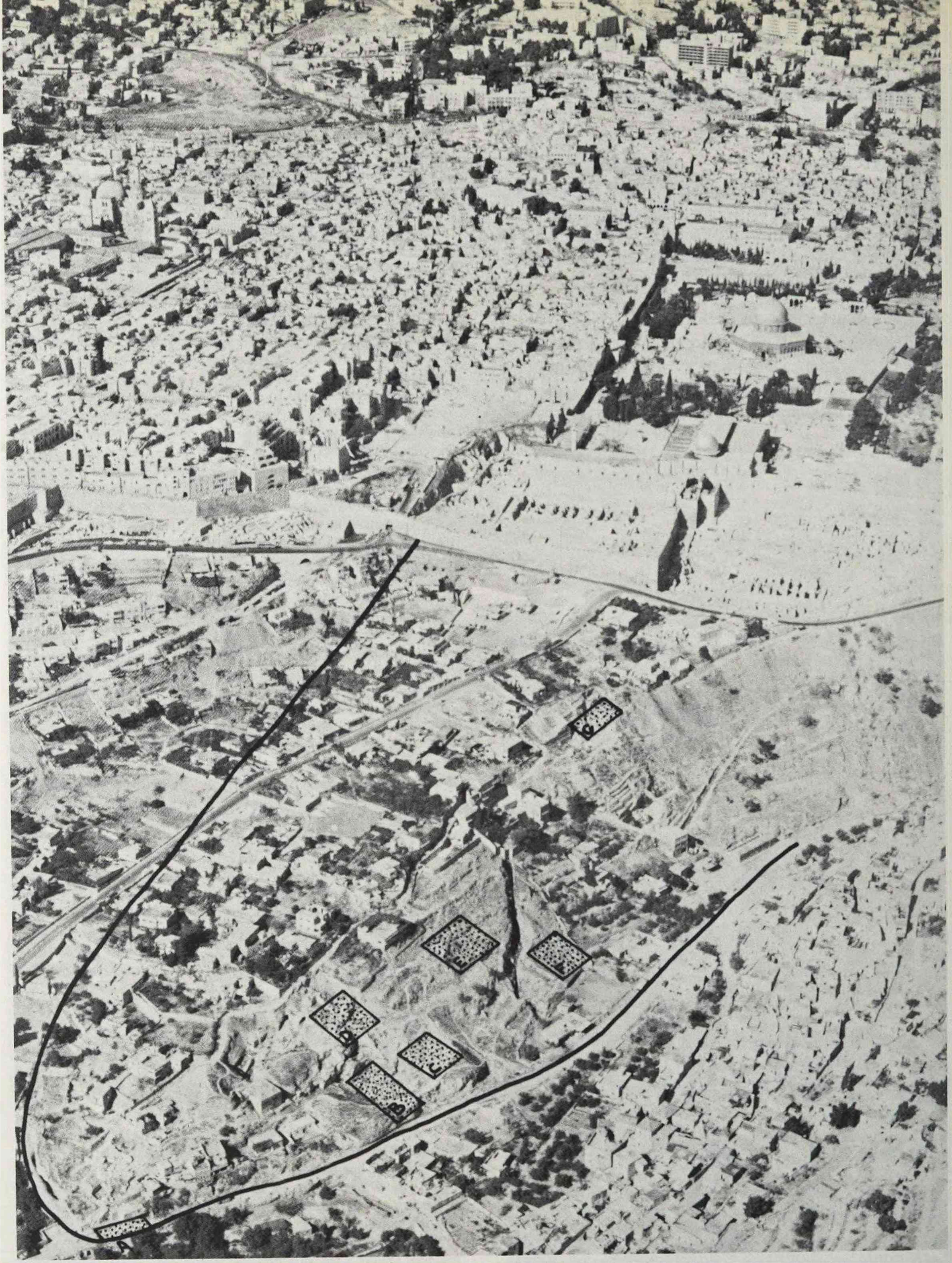
136[*a*] *Impassable ravines* There is no point in the Kidron or Hinnom valleys which is really impassable. What Josephus meant was that in the conditions of ancient warfare, a serious difference in height between the assailants and the defenders would make the walls of the city practically impregnable. Jerusalem was almost always attacked from the north side where there were no great differences in level between the ground outside and inside the city.

136[*b*] *The central valley* is the north-south Tyropoeon valley—the Valley of the Cheesemakers referred to below (140). It lent its name to the Tyropoeon Street, the paved lower thoroughfare bordered by tiers of houses and markets built in terraced formation. The Tyropoeon ravine thus roughly separated the southern part of Jerusalem into the Upper and Lower City (see siege map of the city).

136[*a–b*] *Josephus' famous description of Jerusalem* In contrast to the other ancient historians, Josephus provides us with a more or less complete description of the city on the eve of its destruction. It is especially valuable, written as it was for a public of Diaspora Jews and gentiles who did not know Jerusalem. One of the great difficulties in interpreting many passages in the Bible dealing with Jerusalem of the New Testament times is the fact that the texts were written by contemporaries (or near-contemporaries) who assumed that their readers were familiar with the city as it stood, and they felt no need to indicate the exact position of every wall or building mentioned. We, however, who lack such familiarity with ancient Jerusalem, are left groping in the dark and look to the progress of archaeological research for further enlightenment. On the other hand, the systematic description of Josephus, although not lacking in some obscure passages, nevertheless gives us a general idea of the extent of the city and its external aspect. In addition, there are dispersed throughout his book, particularly in the account of Herod's construction in *War* I, 401-402, and in *Antiquities,* the names of many public buildings then in existence, while the description of the dike (circumvallation) which Titus built around Jerusalem furnishes us with a considerable number of names of geographical features or structures in its immediate vicinity. The fact that this description is as systematic as it is—the wall is described from the northwest (the Citadel and Hippicus tower) in a clockwise direction and back to the starting point—adds to its value as a topographical source. We also find a number of facts about the city and a description of its ruins in various Jewish sources written after the destruction. Most important in this respect are the two tractates of *Mishna Middoth* and *Tamîd* which described the Temple services. Finally, many results of archaeological research supplement and corroborate Josephus' description, as itemized.

137[*a*] *The topographical ridges* The repeated destructions of the city followed by soil erosion and partial reconstructions in the last two millennia have naturally altered its topography, but it is still possible to identify its ancient slopes and valleys. According to Josephus the city he knew had been built on two hills separated by a central valley. This is evident from a topographical map of Jerusalem showing two hilly ridges crossing the Old City from north to south. The western ridge begins at a height of 2,656 ft above sea level, descends to a lower spot near the present Jaffa Gate, rises in the Jewish Quarter (the ancient Upper City), and ends at 2,042 ft in the bottom of the Valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem. The second eastern ridge is lower; it begins at 2541 and descends to 2,452 ft—where its bare rock appears in the unpaved courts of the Temple Mount and at 2,036 ft in the Kidron valley. The two ridges are the east and west, which, according to Josephus, comprised the area of ancient Jerusalem. He goes on to say that the Upper City was built on the higher and more level of the two. The other hill on which the Lower City stood was hog-backed. The identification of these two hills, with the Upper City on the western hill and the Temple Mount, and Lower City on the eastern is generally accepted. Then Josephus goes on to explain why the citadel was built on the western hill.

137[*b*] *Stronghold. Identity of the presumed citadel of David* Josephus follows a tradition that the "stronghold" of David is identical with the one he is referring to as the "stronghold" of the Upper City. But in II Sam. 5, 7 it is related that "...David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the City of David", and the name City of David was given by the king to the citadel of *Zion.* "And David dwelt in the stronghold and called it the City of David" (II Sam. 5, 9). The early name "Zion" specified the eastern lower hill of the biblical city, with its northern sum-



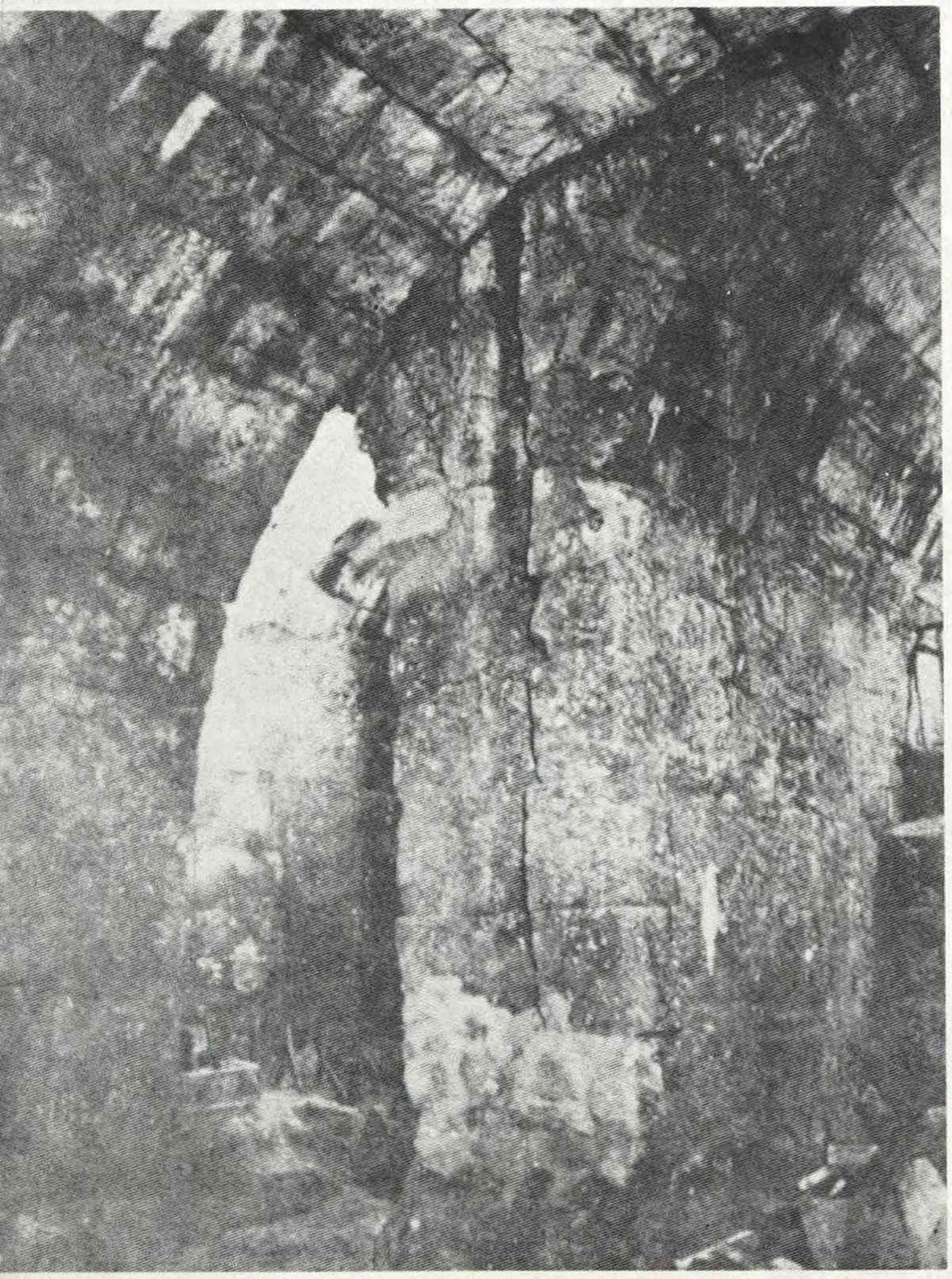
An outstanding site in the City of David. It features a Hasmonean fort and, immediately below it, Israelite houses grouped in "Area G" (as defined by archaeologists)
The triangular (imaginary) line delineates the ancient walled City of David and Area G, above, widely publicized in 1981 when the orthodox chief rabbinate tried to prevent further archaeological research on the pretext that this disturbed the bones of the revered ancestors. They must not be touched, they contend, lest they would not be intact on the Day of Judgment. The rabbinical fiat was rejected by the High Court of Israel, and research has been temporarily resumed

who first built the Temple—though known to us as the Upper Agora [*c*]. The second hill, named the Akra and covered by the Lower City, was hump-like [*d*]. (138) Opposite this was a third hill [*a*], by nature lower than the Akra and formerly cut off from it by another broad ravine [*b*]. (139) Later, however, during the reign of the Hasmoneans, this was filled in because they wanted to unite the city [*c*] with the Temple and reduce the height of the Akra by leveling its summit, so that there too the Temple could be clearly seen above [*c*]. (140) The Valley of the Cheesemakers, as the above-mentioned ravine was called [*d*], separates the hills of the Upper and Lower City, and extends down to Siloam, as we call this rich pool [*d*]. (141) But on the outskirts, the two hills on which the city stood, enclosed by deep ravines and the precipitous cliffs [*a*] on either side rendered the city everywhere inaccessible.

2. The three walls of Jerusalem

(142) Of these three walls one is the most ancient wall built over the hill rising over the deep ravine, and therefore almost impregnable; (143) but apart from its advantageous position, it was also strongly constructed; David and Solomon and their successors on the throne having undertaken the work with pride [*a*].

One of the arches supporting the aqueduct over the Xystus



mit called Mount Moriyah, where Solomon built his temple and palace. Over the generations, the name Zion took on poetic connotations as an appellation of the entire city. One of the curiousphenomena of Jerusalem's topography is the repeated migration of the term "Zion". It moved from the City of David to the Temple Mount and, later, to the northwestern hill dominated by the Hasmonean and Herodian Citadel (134[*d*]), and seen today as the Citadel at the Jaffa gate. By Roman times, the historic location of the City of David was already blurred by an overgrowth of folkloric traditions, and by Christian times the northwest hill came to be regarded as the original Zion and was even provided with a "Tomb of David." Still later, folk imagination and tales of pilgrims placed David's stronghold in the Upper City (Mount Zion) though there is no basis for this in the texts of the Bible. Josephus' innocent misnomer is perpetuated in modern nomenclature: the so-called "David Tower" in the present Citadel is identified with the tower of Phasael there (see map).

137[*c*] *The Upper Agora,* or the upper market, as commonly known, was built on the higher hill; the other hill on which the Lower City stood was hump-like and identified with the Ophel ridge. The historic successor of the Upper City agora was apparently the Roman-Byzantine *Cardo Maximus* excavated in the Jewish Quarter. It was made of heavy pavements, including columns with matching capitals, as illustrated.

137[*d*] *Akra,* the center of the Hellenistic colony which developed in the Lower City in the first half of the 2nd century BC, before the Hasmonean rising which put an end to it. It stood in the Lower City, according to Josephus, even before the time of Herod and his successors. In the opinion of B. Mazar, the Akra stood on the spur of the Ophel ridge at an elevation of some 2,320 feet, facing the Herodian southern wall and the Western Hulda gate of the Temple Mount. A number of Hellenistic remains were recovered there, including stamped Rhodian jar handles from the late third and beginning of the 2nd centuries BC. Josephus, when writing of the Akra, speaks of a structure and of a quarter which disappeared some two centuries before his time and his description remains problematic. The hump-like definition of the Akra is still debated among commentators. Archaeologists are still not agreed about the site of the Akra (see also note 137[*a*] above).

138[*a*] *The third hill* below the Akra sloped toward the deeper Kidron valley.

138[*b*] The broad ravine is the continuation of that referred to in 136[*b*]. It is also called the Valley of the Cheesemakers (Tyropoeon) as in para. 140. It was gradually filled up and built over before and during Herod's time, thus linking the Upper City or Western hill with the Temple Mount area.

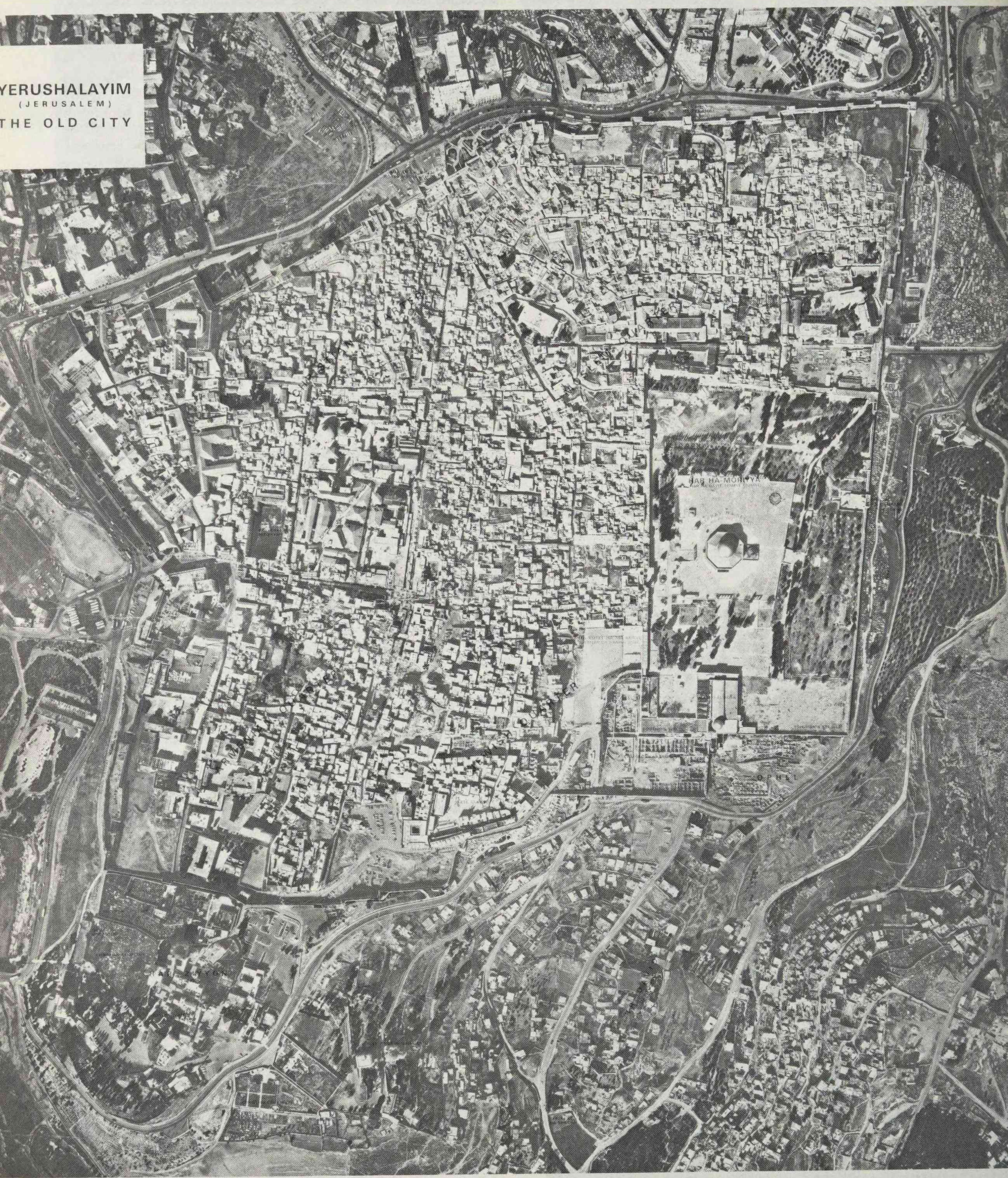
139[*c*] In the process, the old Akra, or whatever remained of it, could not hide the magnificent view over the Temple esplanade which was visible from the western hill, the abode of the high priests and aristocracy (to be described further). The filling of the Tyropoeon was continued on an even vaster scale in Herod's days in order to expand the area of the Temple Mount's approaches. The original valley and its southern extension (outside the walls of the present Old City) are now hardly discernable, soil erosion having practically filled up its concavity.

140[*d*] *The Valley of the Tyropoeon* or the Cheesemakers' central valley is today's Rehov Hāgāy (El-wād in Arabic); it bisects the Old City from the Damascus gate in the north to the historical Dung gate in the south. This valley descended to the Siloam pool, still visible today. The waters of the Gihon spring empty there after coursing through King Hezekiah's famous tunnel (II Kings 20, 20). The Spring of Siloam, or the Pool of Siloam, is situated at the lower end of the Tyropoeon valley.

141[*a*] *Precipitous cliffs* The deep valleys which surrounded the Lower City (including the Ophel) on the east, and the Upper City on the northwest hill, made them immune to attack from the outside. The above topographic outline would be incomplete and fail to explain why the Holy City was immune from attack, had it not been for the ensuing paragraph which described the elevated position of three walls of the city in relation to the historic sections of the capital (see map).

142-143[*a*] *The most ancient wall* According to Josephus, the northern stretch of the *First Wall* started at the northwestern corner of the city (today's Citadel, namely "the hill above them" as in the text), and ran eastwards towards the Temple Mount. A section of wall some 65 m. thick and 41 m. long was discovered by N. Avigad in the underground of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City. This was the wall

YERUSHALAYIM
(JERUSALEM)
THE OLD CITY



Air view map of the walled Old City and environs shows the towers of the Citadel (upper center), the Serpent's pool (Birket es-Sultan), lower left, the Temple Mount, right and the City of David (Ir David), lower right

The map illustrates N. Avigad's discovery of the First Wall, where point 7 may be identified with the Gennath gate; the probable site where this gate stood at the junction of the First Wall and the Second Wall, namely the northern wall, in Herod's time

built probably by King Hezekiah (II Chron. 32, 5) and enclosed the new Makhtesh and Mishne quarter on the western hill. This wall, and the quarters within, had not existed in Solomon's time. The wall, or its substitude, was again fortified by the Hasmonean kings as the starting of the extensive First Wall described by Josephus (see map). On the other hand, a gate was discovered by N. Avigad deep under the First Wall in the Old City (see point 7 in his map) and he suggests that "This is topographically the most appropriate site for a gate in the northern wall of the city (in Hasmonean times) namely the starting point of the *Second Wall* which contoured a quarter in the northern part of the city" (*Upper City of Jerusalem,* p. 69). Work in the Armenian Quarter (the site of Herod's palace) has confirmed that the First Wall on the western flank lay beneath the city wall there. As regards the eastern flank of the First Wall (shown in the map) and its continuation towards the Temple Mount it may be noted that in the days of the Hasmoneans a causeway was built between the eastern end of the First Wall and the Temple Mount and it spanned the Tyropoeon valley. The remains of some of its arches stand below the ancient quarters of the Old City and are known as "Wilson's Arch" (see map and illustrations). Josephus is known for his fondness to attribute early structures to King Solomon's time or to his successors. He had no knowledge of the building phases in Hellenistic and Hasmonean times.

144[*b*] *The Hippicus tower,* is described in para. 161ff of the text.

144[*c*] *The Xystus compound* appears to have been an open-air porticoed plaza paved with polished flagstones and used for public assemblies. It faced the wide expanse of the Western wall of the Temple, near the Wilson Arch and the causeway which passed over the Tyropoeon valley at this point. The Xystus was probably the site of the Gymnasium formerly built by the hellenizing high priest Jason (cf. II Mac. 4, 9) but was no longer in use as such in Herodian times. Several dramatic events happened there (cf. *War* I, 143; II, 342-344 and finally VI 324 ff.). Remains of the Xystus are still visible near the ancient Wilson Arch described in 143[*a*]; see illustration.

144[*d*] *The Council Chamber* or Boulé also known as *Lishkat-Buleoutin* stood beside the Xystus. It is not known whether it is identical with the "Chamber of Hewn Stone" mentioned in Mishna *Middot* 7, 4c and in the New Testament as the seat of the Sanhedrin before it was removed to the Ḥanuyot Halls situated in the Royal Portico on the south side of the Temple esplanade.

145[*a*] Following the description of the eastern section of the First Wall, the author turns to its western section, namely its continuation around the higher confines of the city. The First Wall started in the Upper City and began at the same starting point, the Hippicus tower. It extended to two points of special interest to us: One is the thick wall fortified by the Hasmonean (142-143 described in above) and its possible connection with Yennath gate (cf. 146[*a*]); the other Bethso (cf. 145[*h*]).

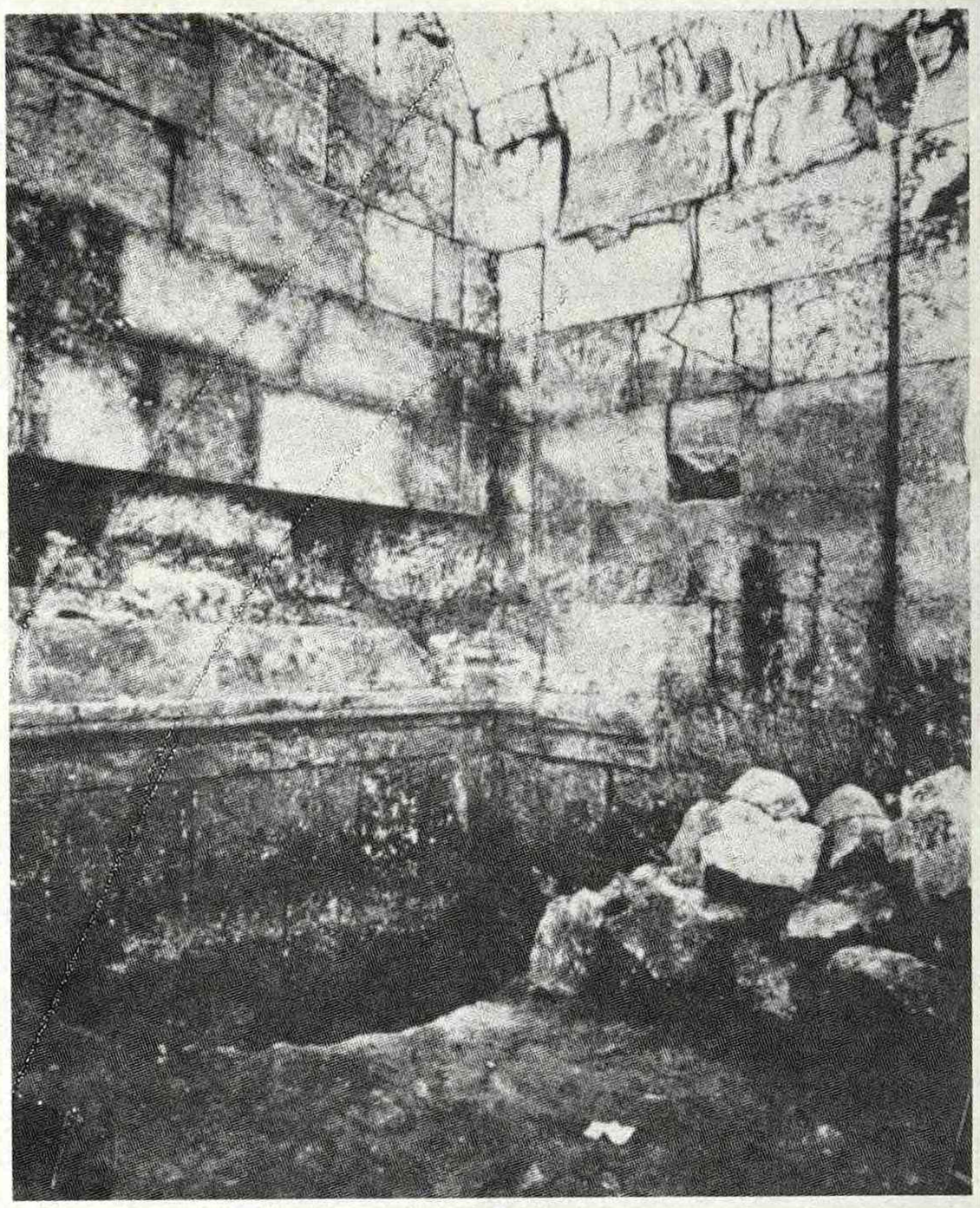
145[*b*] *Bethso and the Gate of the Essenes* The discovery that the two were linked historically has helped to solve a long-standing mystery relating to their identity. Y. Yadin has found the clue by decipherment and interpretation of the *Temple Scroll,* composed apparently by Essene sectaries living in Jerusalem. Bethso stood for the Hebrew Bethzoa, namely, a site of outdoor latrines situated close to, but outside the walls to the northwest of Jerusalem on Mount Zion, yet close enough to their communal center which they termed the *maḥane* (camp in Hebrew). The location was ordained by the Law as well as their rules which provided outhouses set apart outside the camp for the use of the members (cf. *War* I, 120-161). J. T. Milik has also confirmed this from a reading of the *Copper Scroll.* The location of the Bethso area may have been just below the site of the present Gabat School on Mount Zion. Bethso may therefore be southwest of the Essene gate, namely, southwest of the angle or Corner tower of the First Wall—along its southerly stretch — where it bends southwards (see diagram) according to B. Pixner.

145[*c*] The two other western sections of the First Wall are: the southern section which stood over the Gē-Hinnom valley and ran to the southeastern corner beyond the issue of the Spring of Siloam (Shiloah) and the Pool (or Fountain) of Siloam (miscalled Solomon) nearby.

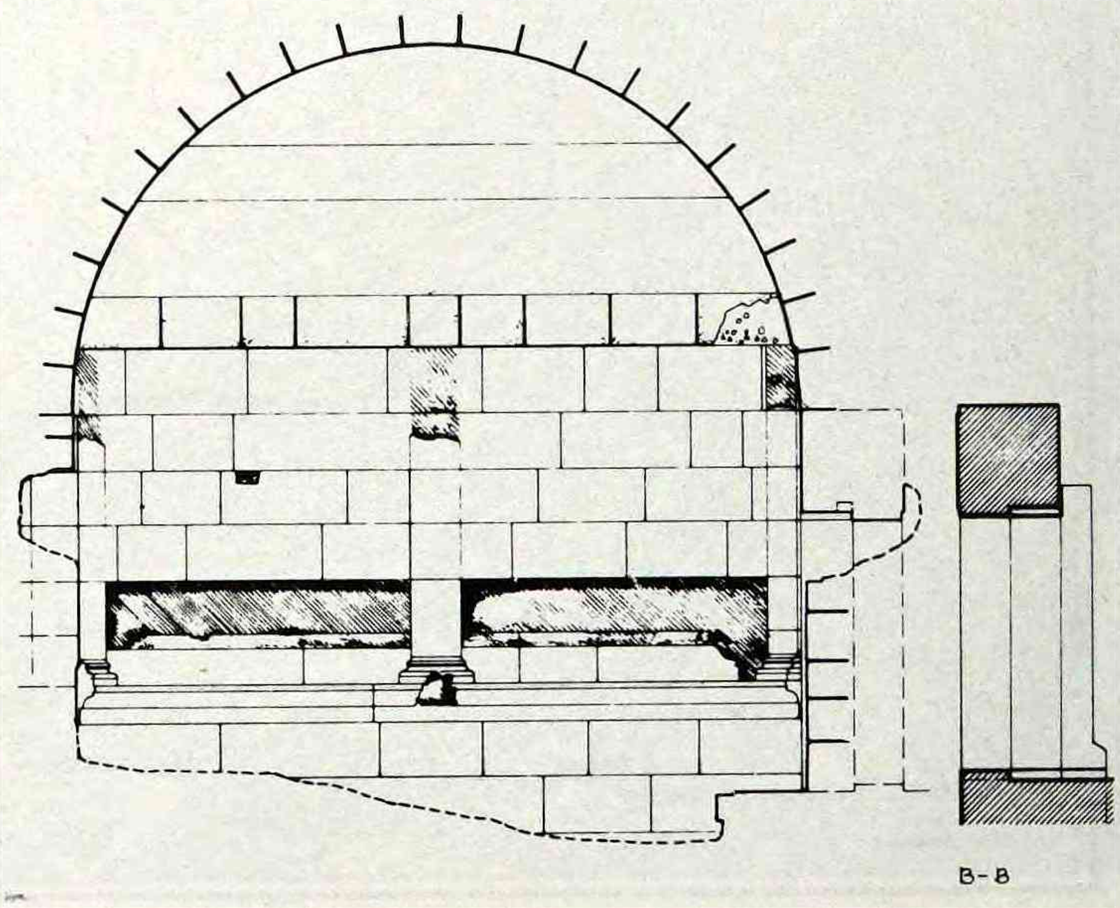
145[*c*] *Fountain of Siloam,* or the Pool of Siloam, referred to above.

145[*d*] *Towards Solomon's pool* Josephus was not aware that this was in effect the Spring of Gihon. The line of the First Wall of Jerusalem was

(144) Starting in the north at the tower called Hippicus [*b*], it reached to the Xystus [*c*], then — joining the Council Chamber [*d*]—ended at the western portico of the Temple. (145) Beginning at the same point but running in the other direction westward [*a*], it descended through the place called Bethso [*b*] to the Gate of the Essenes [*b*], then turned southwards above the Fountain of Siloam [*c*]. From there it bent again

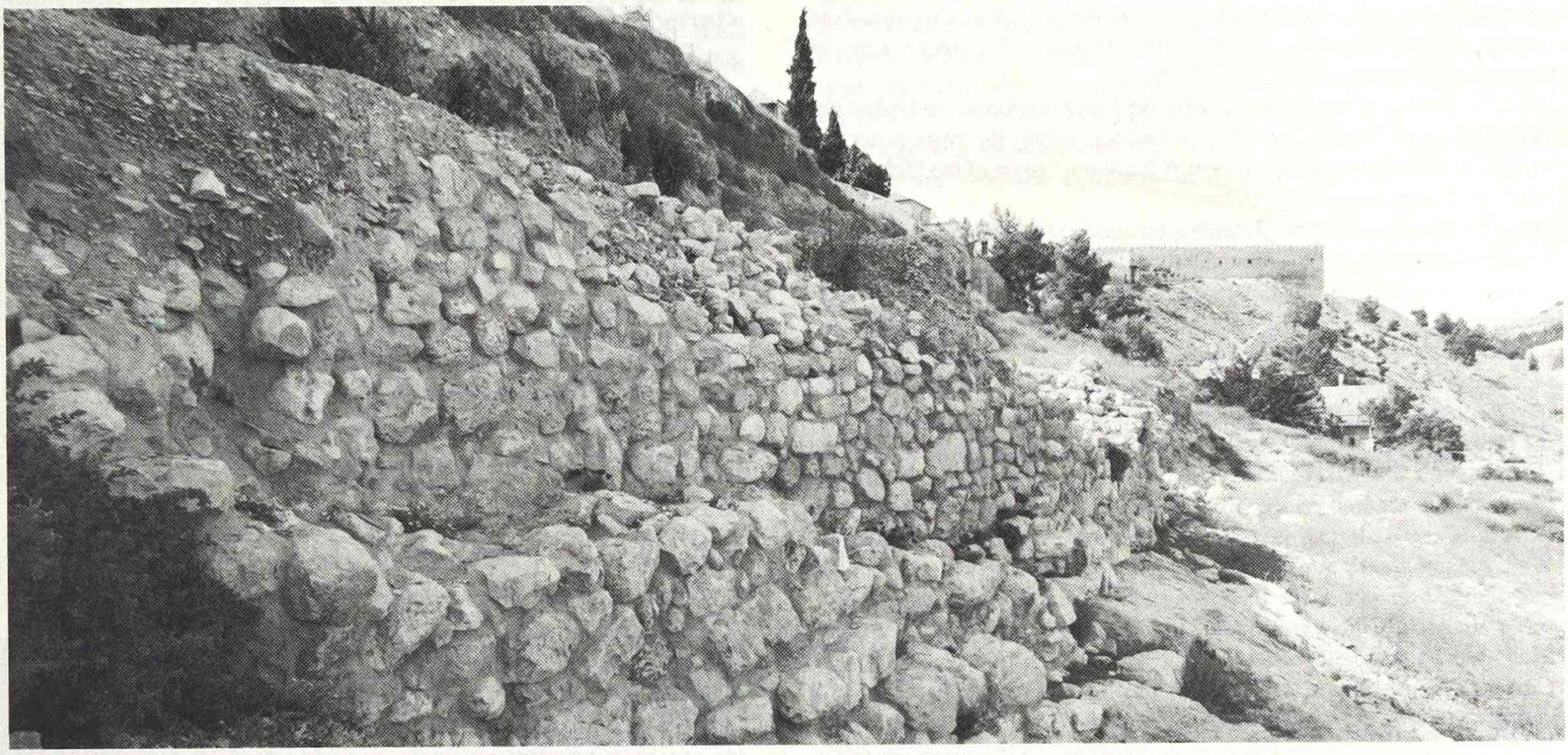


The small hall of the Xystus, a former Hellenistic gymnasium. This hall was called the "Masonic Hall" in the decades preceding 1940



MASONIC HALL

determined by the topography of the bare western hill that commanded the Hinnom valley in the south, now situated beyond the Turkish wall of the Old City (which represents a far more restricted area than Jerusalem of the 1st century AD). In retrospect, he did attribute the building of this (southern) section of the First Wall to the kings of Judah (before 586 BC) and was not aware that the Hasmonean dynasty (which preceded Herod) had made far greater progress along the line of the First Wall. According to N. Avigad, "this mistaken impression of Josephus explains why he was in error in identifying the Upper City with the stronghold, or citadel, of David (137 [*b*] above). He was certain that the western hill (west of the present Old City walls) was settled and fortified in the days of the kings of Judah, and he did not know that the biblical stronghold



Area E in the City of David, in process of excavation (1982). The building of small Israelite houses was characterized by their erection on terraces and spurs of the hill. This explains the biblical term "millo" (filling) characterizing such construction in this area of Jerusalem (I Kings 9, 24)

Dr. K. Kenyon's and Dr. V. Lux' excavations in the Muristan modern commercial mall area revealed early structures that had lain underground since late Roman times. The Church of the Redeemer was later built over the area. The domes of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher loom in the background. The Moslems had built a minaret on the site to "guard" (and supervise) the holy Christian shrine which is still, legally speaking, Arab property

(of Zion) was actually situated on the smaller and lower eastern hill. Its history-laden past was not remembered in later centuries, even by a historian of Josephus' time. Hence, where he mentions *Solomon's pool,* he was not aware of the former existence of the Spring of Gihon and the Hezekiah tunnel dug underground which fed the pool (or Fountain of Solomon as he called it; cf. II *Kings* 20, 20 and II Chronicles 32, 30 ff). The reason is that the corresponding and intervening built-up area was covered in his time, and that he took Solomon's pool and its abundant waters to be an actual spring." (N. Avigad, *The Upper City of Jerusalem,* Hebrew [1980], pp. 57-59).

145[*e*] *Ophlas* or the Ophel, namely the lower section of the Ophel, the historic City of David. The wall climbed and joined the eastern portico of the Temple Mount at a point which faced the "angle of the Ophel"; cf. Matt, 4, 5 (see map).

146[*a*] *The Second Wall* Josephus mentioned the Second Wall only in one short sentence, but the relative brevity may be deduced from another passage (*War* V, 158 which assigns to the wall only fourteen towers, as compared to the sixty in the First and ninety in the Third Wall). The starting point of this wall, the "Gennath Gate" is defined in 142-143[*a*] (see map). The line of this wall appears to lie within the Old City of today. The remains of the fine Roman gate and its tower, uncovered under the present Damascus gate, may lie on the line of this wall. Furthermore, Dr. Kenyon's and Dr. U. Lux' excavations near the Muristan Quarter (south of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre) and beneath the nearby Church of the Redeemer revealed that this area was outside the Second Wall. Finally, traces of quarrying running west from the Damascus gate may indicate the line of the wall here. In fact, Calvary Hill itself was part of an abandoned quarry *outside the wall.* However, since the "Second Wall" was located in its entirety within and beneath the present-day Old City, it is impossible to ascertain its precise course at present.

146[*b*] *Antonia* Located adjacent to the northwestern corner of the Temple Mount, this fortress was rebuilt by Herod on the site of the *Baris* fortress (dating from Hasmonean times). It stood on a rocky saddle which connected the eastern hill (Temple Mount) with the northern ridge (Bezetha), namely, at the northern end of the Temple Mount esplanade where the Arab Omariya school stands today. It measured about 365 × 137 ft. It thus gained mastery over the outer Temple Courts. It may be observed that a famous pavement now situated in the Convent of the Sisters of Sion in the Via Dolorosa, is generally attributed by popular tradition to this fortress and named *Lithostrotos.* This is presumed to be the pavement where Pilate condemned Jesus, but it has no connection with either Jesus or the Antonia tower; it is merely a small Roman forum square from the days of Hadrian who erected it a century later, and not the historic Roman *praetorium* as imagined by early Christian pilgrims. This interpretation suits the archaeological facts as established by P. Benoit O. P., who further established that Pilate's *praetorium* was at Herod's palace in the northwest of the Upper City (*War* I, 402) V, 77 ff.

147[*c*] *Tower of Psephinus* Cf. V, 55, 133[*c*], 160[*a*]. From there, the highest point of the ridge, it turned east on the undulating rocky ground and contoured the Helena monuments and royal caverns.

147[*d*] Cf. V, *Helena's monuments.* See 55[*d*] above.

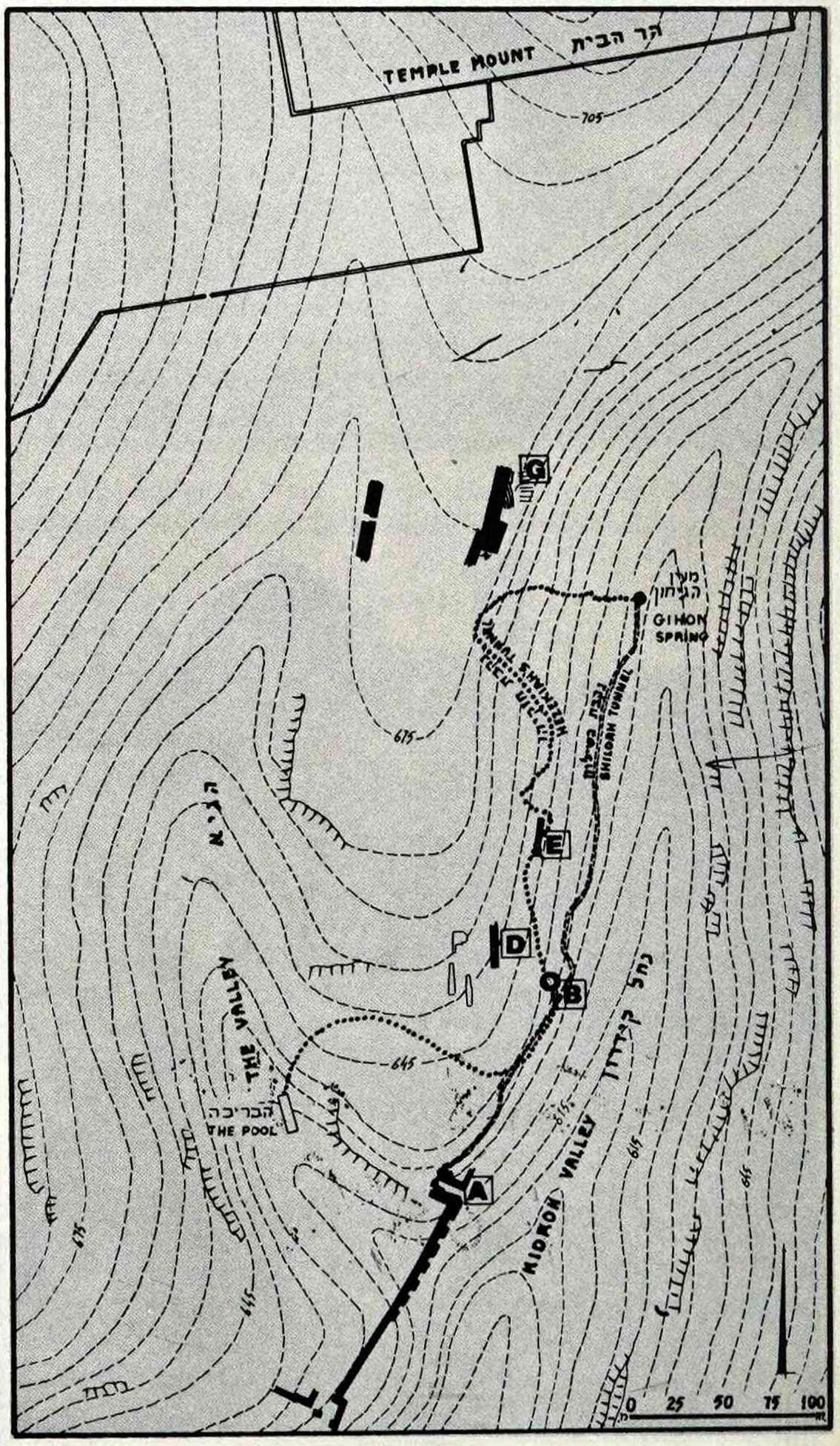
147[*e*] *Fuller's tomb* Not identified.

147[*f*] *The Kidron valley defenses* The Third Wall joined the "Old" or First Wall over the brow of the Kidron valley. "Actually, the lay of the land (in Jerusalem) is such that there was no proper line of defense between the central (Tyropoeon) valley and the northern part of the Kidron valley to the east (see map); only much further north was the Third Wall to take advantage of the Kidron slope for defensive purposes" (B. Mazar, *Jerusalem Revealed,* pp. 11-12, Jerusalem, 1976). When this wall reached the valley it turned south and extended to a point outside the Israel pool, where it joined the end of the First Wall. As indicated in our map, this wall in the east ran in a parallel line to the eastern retaining wall of the Temple Mount esplanade (which it protected and is the one we see today) up to an angle a short distance east of the Angle of the Ophel (cf. 145[*d*] above). Between this point and the Angle stood a stairway which led to an *eastern gate* opening on the Royal Portico, as observed by B. Mazar. All this section of the First Wall lies towards Solomon's pool [*d*], and after passing a place called Ophlas [*e*], it joined the covered eastern portico of the Temple. (146) The Second Wall [*a*] started from the gate that they called Gennath [*a*] in the First Wall; it enclosed only the northern district of the town, and went up as far as Antonia [*b*]. (147) The Third Wall started at the Hippicus tower, from which it extended as far north as the Psephinus tower [*c*], then going down opposite the monuments [*d*] of Helena (Queen of Adiabene and daughter of King Izates), and proceeding past the royal caverns [*d*] it bent around a corner tower near the so-called Fuller's tomb [*e*], and joining the ancient wall terminated at the valley called Kidron [*f*].

The Third Wall and expanding Jerusalem

(148) This wall was built by Agrippa to enclose the later additions to the city, hitherto quite unprotected; for the town's overflowing population had gradually

The known course of the First Wall on the eastern flank of the City of David as far as and south of the Gihon spring



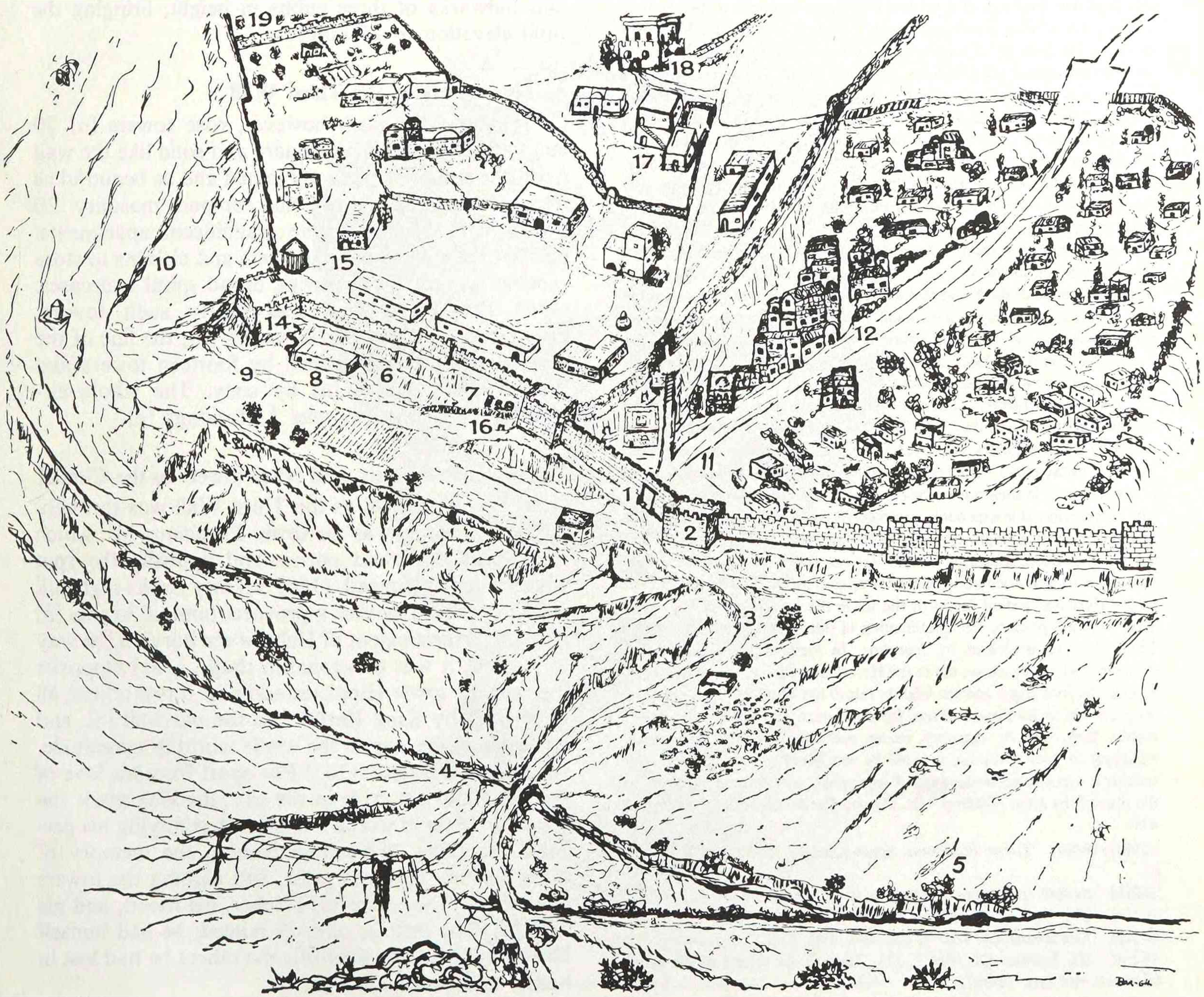
crept beyond the city walls. (149) Indeed, the population linking the area north of the Temple to the hill [*a*] had expanded so far that even a fourth hill was covered with houses. This hill, which is called Bezetha [*b*], was situated opposite Antonia, (150) but was cut off from it by a deep trench, dug purposely so as to sever the foundations of Antonia from the hill and render them both less approachable and more

Attempted design of Jerusalem's First Wall and adjacent structures, before AD 70 (as suggested by B. Pixner). I. Gate of the Essenes. 2. Southwest corner tower of the First Wall. 3. Path leading to the south. 4-5. Ge-hinnom valley. 6. Rock scarp that supported the First Wall. 7. Ritual baths outside the gate. 8. Bethso: Essene latrines (according to Temple Scroll). 9-10. Area of Bethso. 11-12-13. Paved street leading to the Temple. 14. Tower along the First Wall. 15. Rock-hewn ritual bath (according to Copper Scroll). 16. Wall tower as explained in para. 156[a]. 17. Caenaculum building (scene of the Last Supper). 18. House of the high priest Caiaphas on Mount Zion. 19. Garden of Herod's palace

under the Muslim cemetery facing the Mount of Olives. Traces of this were discovered by Warren about a hundred years ago (see emplacement of same according to I. Magen's reconstruction).

149[*a*] *Topography of the fourth hill* The inhabitants of Jerusalem expanded beyond the "hill" (the Upper City on the western ridge described in note 137[*a*]) as well as the Mishne quarter and built their houses around a fourth hill north of the Temple Mount. The third hill mentioned is the one described in 138[*a*]. This fourth hill is called Bezetha (see 149[*b*]), which was included by King Agrippa I within the Third Wall. It is probable that what is meant here by the fourth hill is the ridge north of the Old City of today from which the western and eastern hills project. The ridge was included within the line of the Third Wall; it begins at 2,420 ft and descends eastwards to 2,323 ft near the Kidron valley.

149[*b*]-151[*b*] *Bezetha* also called the New Town, stands for Beth-Zada in Hebrew, suggesting a source of water. This name seemed to be the original form after which the Pools of Bethesda were named. The lower level of the Pools of Bethesda have been uncovered below the Byzantine piers of a church commemorating the events related in John 5, 3 f. The original pool was built in pre-Hasmonean times, in the early second century BC, by Simon the Just, high priest of Judaea in the days of King Antiochus III.



elevated; (151) and thus the depth of the ditch greatly increased the relative height of the towers. The recently built quarter was known as Bezetha [*b*] in the vernacular and might be translated "New town" in Greek. (152) When he saw the residents of the new quarter in need of defense, Agrippa [*c*], the father and namesake of the present king, began the wall mentioned above; but fearing that the scale of the preparations might cause Claudius Caesar to suspect that he had designs of revolt and insurrection, he stopped when he had only laid the foundations [*c*]. (153) Indeed, if the wall had been finished as it began, the city would have been impregnable [*a*]; for it was built of stones 20 cubits long and 10 broad [*b*], so closely bonded that they could scarcely be undermined with iron implements or shaken by engines. (154) The wall itself was 10 cubits thick, and it would doubtless have reached a greater height than it did had not the plan of its founder been frustrated. (155) Later, though its erection by the Jews was hurried, it rose to a height of 20 cubits, besides having battlements of two cubits and bulwarks of three cubits in height, bringing the total elevation to 25 cubits.

3. The towers of the Third Wall

(156) Above the wall, however, rose towers [*a*] 20 cubits wide and 20 high, square and solid like the wall itself, the stones as perfectly joined and as beautiful as in a temple. (157) Above this compact masonry, 20 cubits high [*b*], there were magnificent apartments, and above these, upper chambers and cisterns to store rainwater, each tower having broad spiral staircases. (158) The Third Wall had ninety such towers, disposed at intervals of 200 cubits [*c*]; the line of the middle wall [*d*] was divided by fourteen towers and that of the old wall [*d*] by sixty. The whole circumference of the city was 33 furlongs [*e*].

The tower Psephinus, and other towers in the Citadel

(159) But wonderful as the Third Wall was throughout, still more so was the tower Psephinus [*a*], which rose at its northwest corner and opposite the spot where Titus encamped. (160) Seventy cubits high [*a*], it afforded from sunrise a prospect both of Arabia [*b*] and the farthest extent of Hebrew territory all the way to the sea; it was octagonal in shape. (161) Opposite this was the tower Hippicus, and near it two others, all three built by King Herod into the old wall [*c*], and unsurpassed by any in the whole world in magnitude, beauty and strength. (162) For apart from his love of grandeur and his pride in the city, the king made the splendor of these works a means of gratifying his personal emotions, dedicating them to the memory of three persons he loved most, and naming the towers after them. They were his brother, his friend, and his wife [*d*]. The last, as already related, he had himself killed out of jealous love [*d*]; the others he had lost in battle, after a valiant fight [*e*].

152[*c*] *Agrippa I,* father of Agrippa II. The belief that the completed Third Wall would make the city impregnable caused a last hurried attempt to wind up its construction after the death of Agrippa I, i.e., during the years of the rebellion AD 66-70, right up to the eve of the capture of the capital. The northern part of Jerusalem was not protected by ravines, and was thus the weakest in its defense.

153[*a*] *Imgregnable* According to Josephus the town would have been so had the wall been completed, namely made higher, as planned by King Agrippa. The Roman authorities ordered construction to cease, and the wall was completed only after the outbreak of the First Revolt in AD 66, using any material that came to hand. Josephus described this at more length than the Second Wall, but less briefly than the First (V, 142-145). Though he stresses here that the wall was complete to a height of 20 cubits, he notes later (cf. 260[*b*]) that in one place it was not completed at all. This in fact was another weak spot where Titus broke through the wall.

153[*b*] 20 cubits = 10 m.; 10 cubits = 5 m.

156[*a*] Similar and contemporary towers may be seen along the western wall of the Upper City (Mount Zion) and in a northeastern section of the eastern retaining wall of the Temple Mount, as illustrated. The towers of the Third Wall jutted westwards and northwards (see map).

157[*b*] Approx. 10 m.

158[*c*] Approx. 50 m.

158[*d*] The reference to the Middle Wall was the Second Wall, and the Old Wall was the First, as described in the commentaries to 142-145[*c*].

158[*e*] *The circumference and identity of the Third Wall* 33 furlongs or stades are close to 6.5 kms, which is somewhat exaggerated in light of the recent archaeological findings, described below. However, it appears to some that Josephus estimated this length as that of the whole wall surrounding the expanded Jerusalem (see map). In any case, even a somewhat shorter circumference favors a more northerly position than the existing Ottoman north wall of the Old City, a fact which suits the following archaeological findings. "There is good reason to believe that the Third Wall, which started, according to Josephus, at the Hippicus tower built by Herod in the Citadel, reached the Psephinus tower at its northern extension in modern Jerusalem's Russian Compound, and from there turned east as far as a spot facing the Tomb of Queen Helena, the so-called Tombs of the Kings in East Jerusalem. It continued around the New City on the north and east, and then descended into the Kidron valley ... Remains of the wall were identified by E. L. Sukenik and L. A. Mayer in 1925-1927 and 1940, confirming Edward Robinson's 19th-century survey. More sections have come to light in recent years. To date, a total of some 1,200 m. of the wall have been traced. The identification of this line of the Third Wall has been questioned and even opposed by a few scholars. However, there has been further investigation. In 1972, excavations were resumed which uncovered the substructures of the wall and, in their midst, the remains of a tower bulging northwards (the more vulnerable exposure, unprotected by natural ravines) by some nine meters over a length of about 45 m. between the Nablus Road and the Road of the Engineering Corps. Various features—the width of the wall, the northern orientation of the tower and, more significantly, shards of the Herodian period found in the fill in the area south of the wall's substructure—point to the identification of this structure with Agrippa's Third Wall as described by Josephus. In view of its thickness and tremendous size, its stones cut in the Herodian style (i.e. their flat margin around the four edges and the slightly raised flat boss), its ninety towers, each one about 60 meters distant from the next, and set in a line 4,200 meters long, and its masonry stones robbed from other structures, testifying to poor planning, it could be attributed only to the fact that though it was started in the days of Agrippa, it was finished hurriedly at the time of the great rebellion." (B. Mazar, *The Mountain of the Lord,* p. 83.)

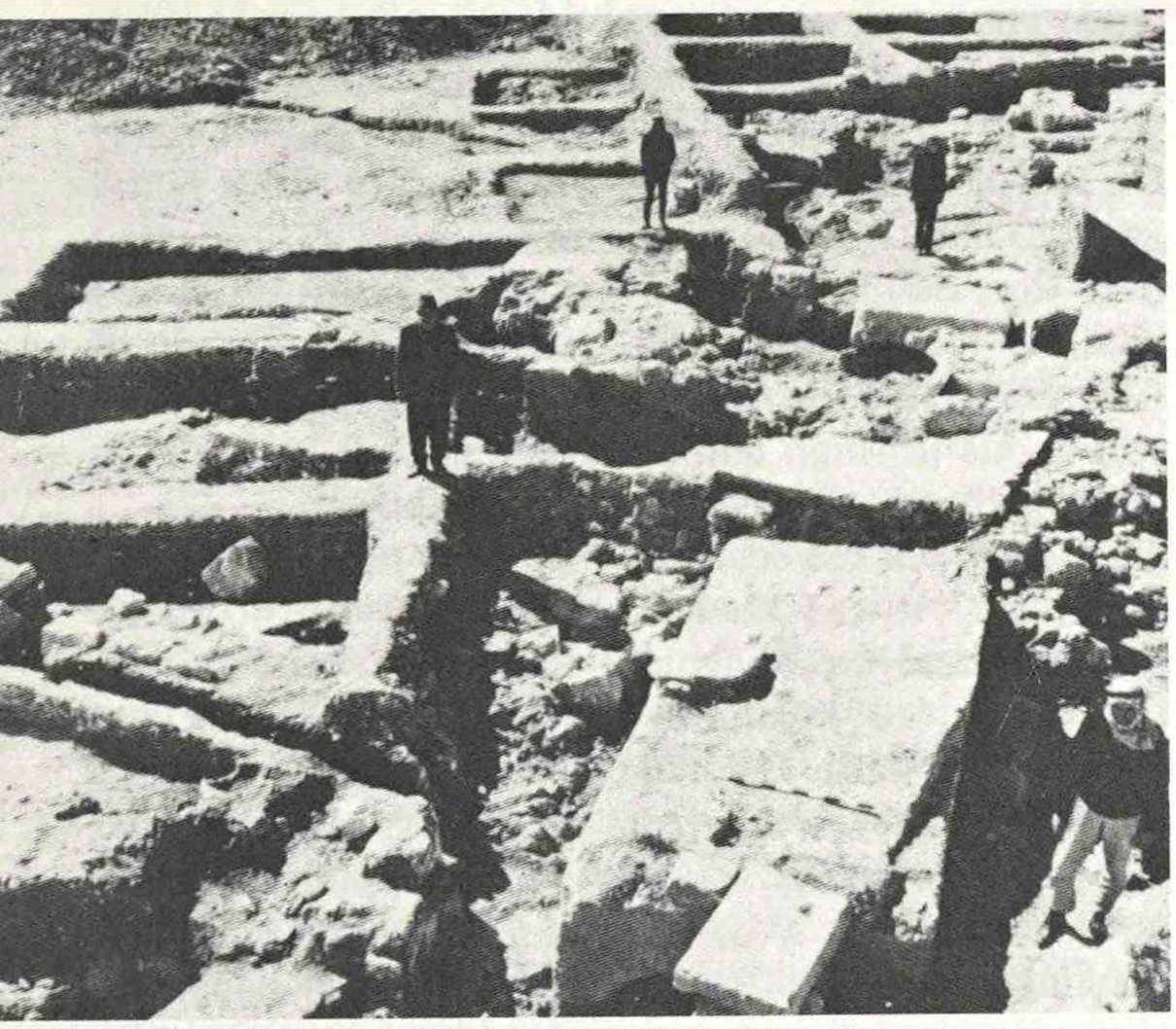
159[*a*]–160[*a*] *Tower Psephinus,* approximately 33–35 m. Cf. V. 147 c.

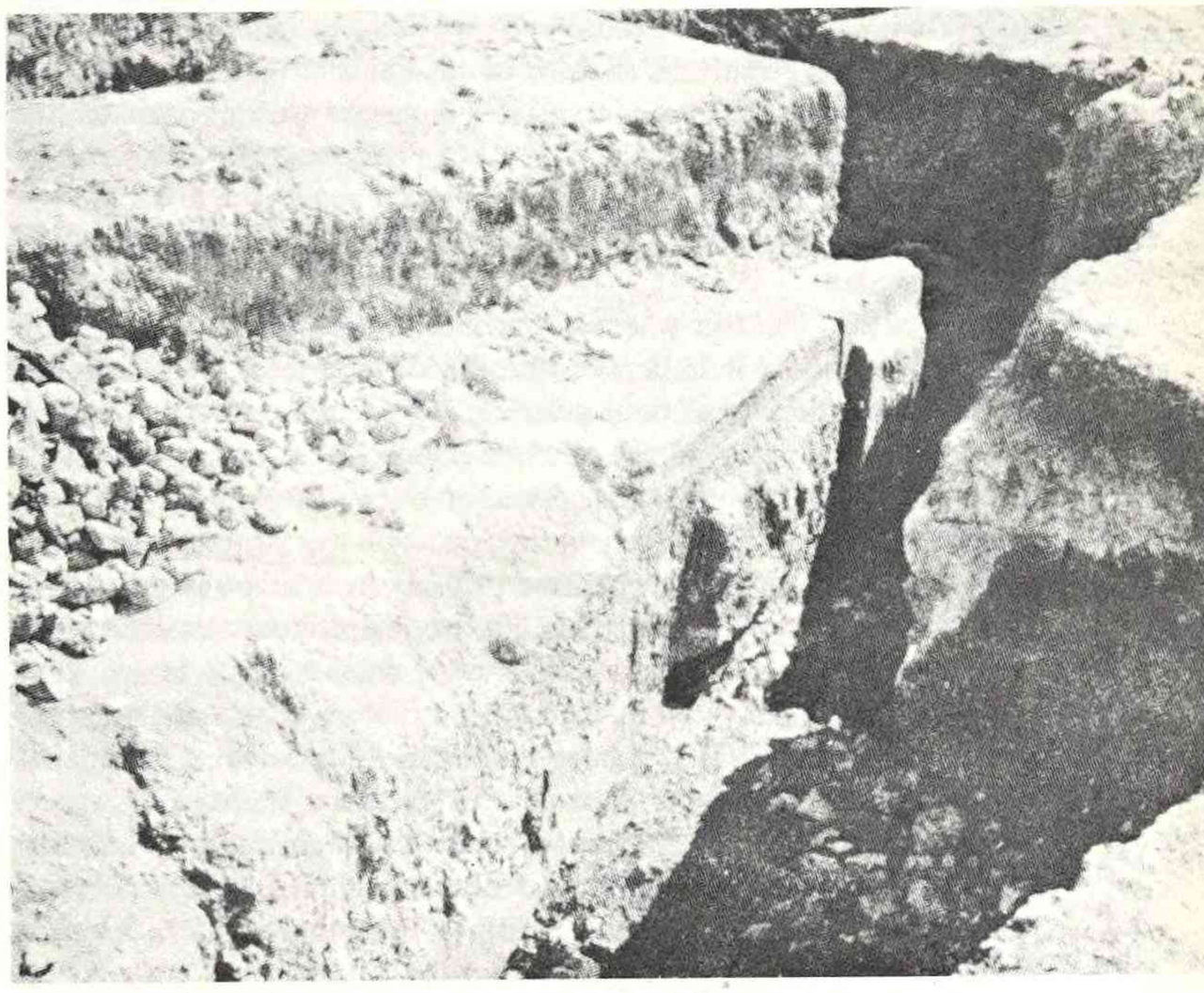
160[*b*] *Arabia* Nabatean territory east of Jordan.

161[*c*] Old Wall Cf. V. 142[*a*]-145[*c*].

162[*d*] *Mariamme* Cf. *War* I, 436-444, 480, 521.

162[*e*] *His brother* Cf. *War* I, 271. There is no record of the other brother's end (see 166[*a*]).





Two sections of the foundations of the Third Wall

The Emperor Claudius. He forbade the Jews to complete the Third Wall

(163) Hippicus, named after his friend, was a square tower, its length and breadth being 25 cubits [*a*] each way, thirty cubits high [*a*], and solid throughout. (164) On top of this compact mass of masonry was a reservoir, 20 cubits deep [*a*], to store rainwater; (165) and over this, double-roofed living quarters [*a*] 25 cubits high, divided into several chambers with roofs of various colors; above this again rose a ring of turrets two cubits [*a*] high and battlements three cubits high, making the total height eighty cubits [*a*].

(166) Phasael, the second tower, was named after his brother [*a*]; it was of equal length and width, 40 cubits [*a*] each, and the height of its solid base was also 40 cubits [*a*]. (167) Round the top ran a portico, ten cubits high [*a*], protected by breastworks and bulwarks. (168) Rising from the middle of the portico was another tower, divided into sumptuous apartments, including a bath, so that nothing might be wanting to impart to it the appearance of a palace. (169) Its summit was crowned with a ring of battlements and turrets, making its total height about 90 cubits [*b*]. In form it resembled the tower of Pharos [*c*] that sends a beacon light to sailors approaching Alexandria, but its circumference was much larger. It had now become the seat of Simon's tyrannic rule [*d*].

163[*a*]-165[*a*] *Hippicus* (whose end is strangely ignored in the narrative of Herod's reign) was situated on the angle of the First Wall near Phasael. The cubit dimensions translated in meters are approximately 12 m. in width and 15 m. in height. The three towers stood in a strategic triangle north of Herod's palace, which they sheltered. The tower has apparently been replaced by a Crusader wall in the northwest of the present Citadel.

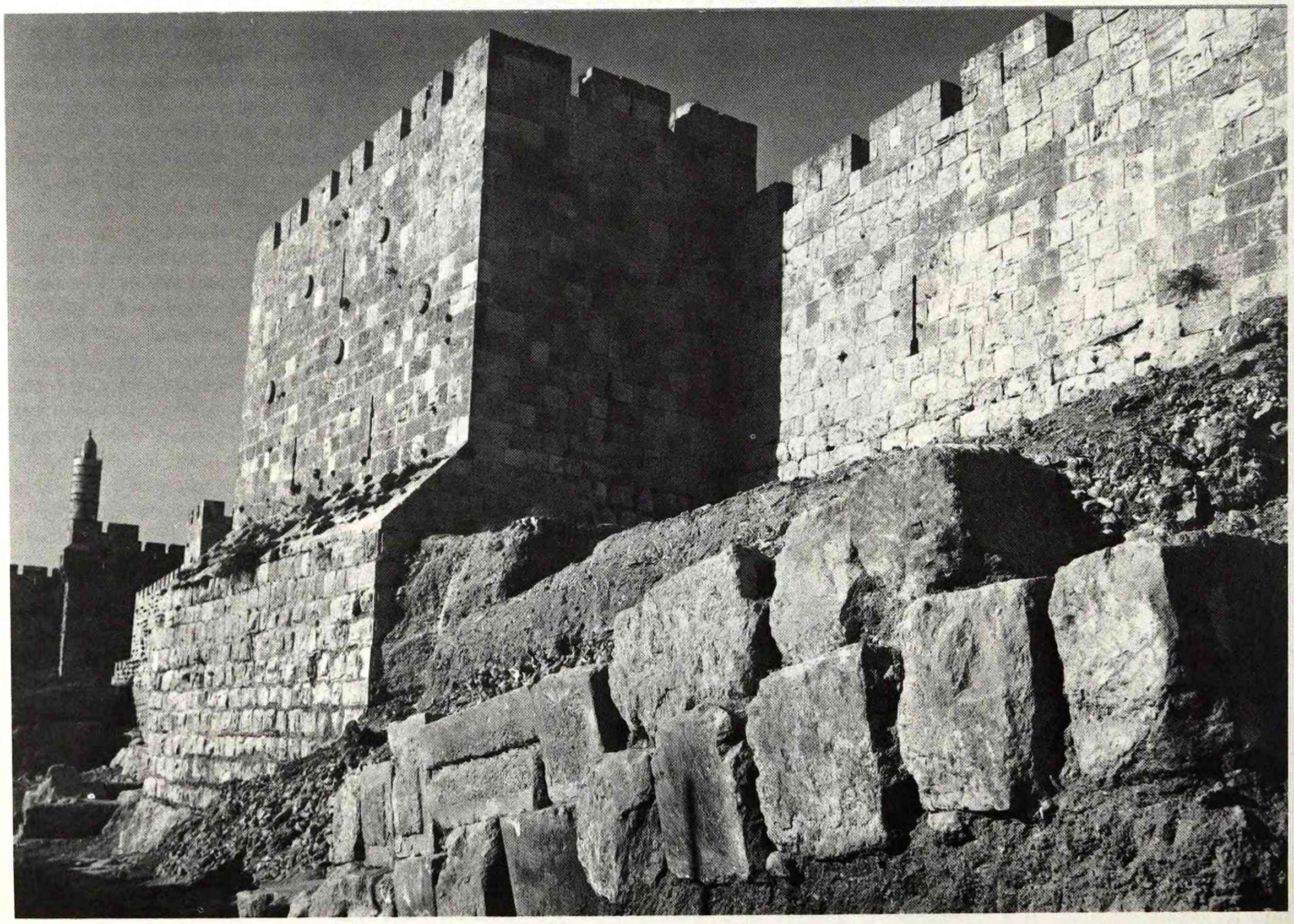
166[*a*]-167[*a*] *Phasael* was taken prisoner by the Parthians and committed suicide (*War* I, 271). The Phasael tower is most often identified with the lower portion of the square, solid structure erroneously called "David's Tower" in the northeast of the present Citadel compound. This identification is based on the dimensions given by Josephus of the base of the Phasael tower which closely correspond with this structure. In metric terms the height of the ancient base is 19.85 m, built in two parts each, of eight courses. The upper part is built of tooled drafted stone 17.12 m. wide and 21.40 m. long, and the lower part is slightly larger. It is preserved to a height of 20 m. This solid structure is outstanding in the quality of its typically Herodian structure. Its ashlars with bulging bosses in their middle stand out above the Crusader moat below the tower. The upper part of the tower is a later addition when massive towers, now still visible, were built apparently over the bases of Herod's towers by the conquering Arabs and Crusaders (13th-14th centuries AD). Josephus relates that the towers were built within the ancient walls and, indeed, during the excavations conducted at the Citadel it was ascertained that the Phasael tower was set by Herod into part of the more ancient Hasmonean city wall, i.e., in the northwestern corner of the First Wall. Apart from the exterior outline of the tower, archaeological details of its plan are lacking.

169[*b*] 90 cubits—approx. 40-45 m.

169[*c*] *Pharos* Cf. *War* IV, 613 ff.

169[*d*] Simon-bar-Giora. Cf. 183[*b*].

Note the tremendous size of the squared stones discovered in clearing the First Wall

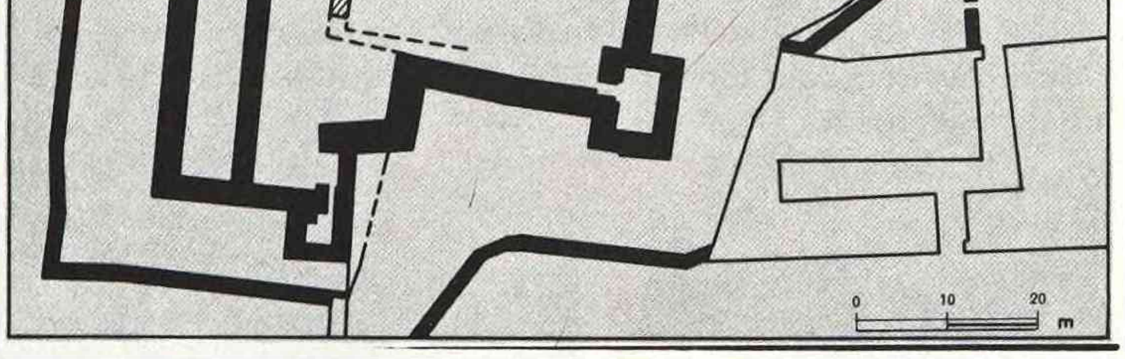


(170) Mariamme, the third tower [*a*]—for this was the queen's name— was solid for the first 20 cubits [*b*], its length and width being also 20 cubits. (171) But the upper residential quarters were more luxurious and ornate than those of the other towers, as the king thought it fitting that the tower named after a woman should be more ornate than those called after men, just as they outdid the woman's tower in strength. The total height of this last one was 55 cubits [*c*].

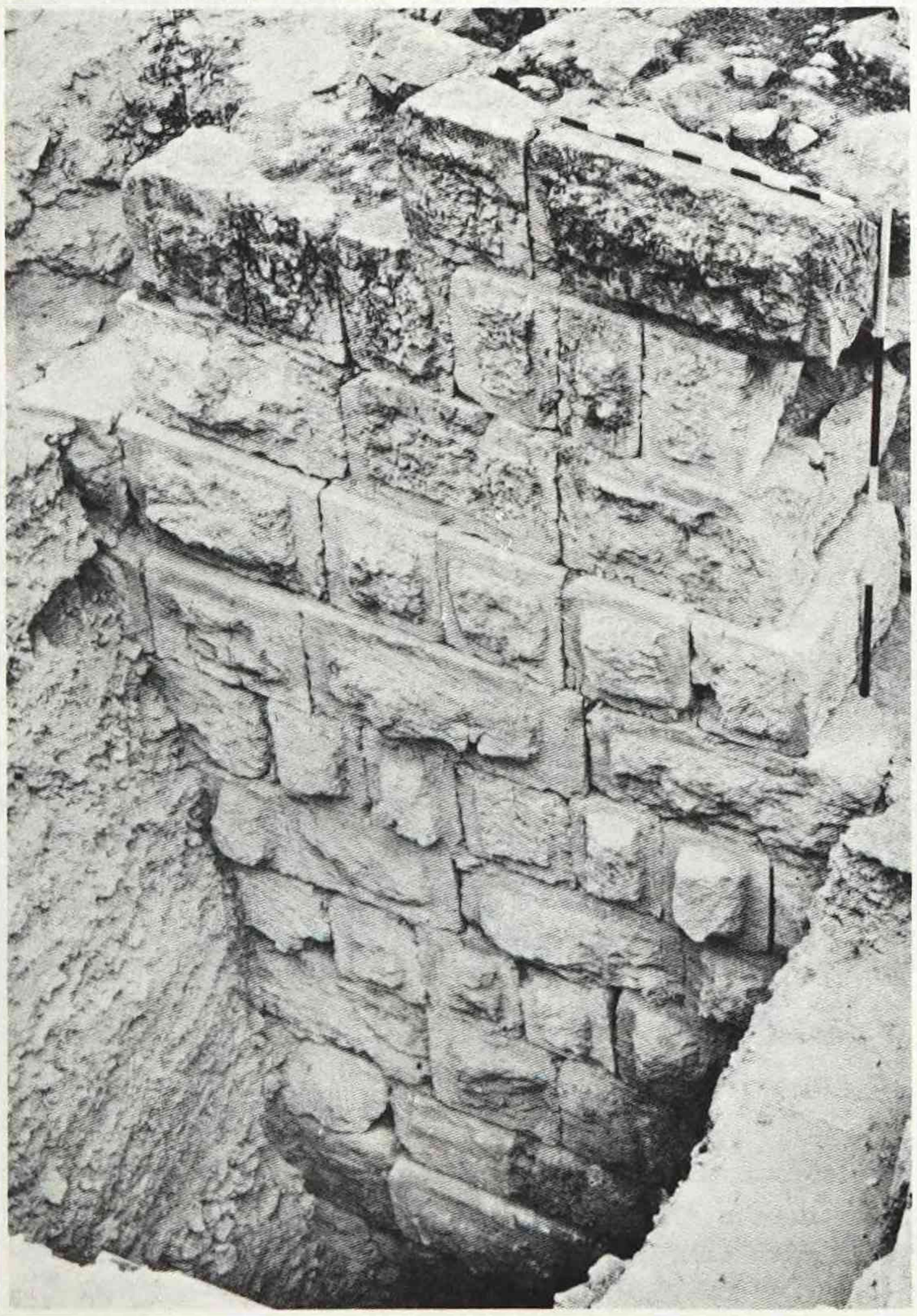
4. (172) However, the magnitude of the towers seemed much greater still because of their site. (173) For the ancient wall [*a*] in which they stood was itself built on a high hill, and above the hill rose, as it were, a sort of crest 30 cubits [*b*] higher still; erected on this the towers gained enormously in height [*c*]. (174) The size of these stones [*d*] was also marvelous, for they did not consist of ordinary blocks or boulders that men can carry, but were cut of white marble [*e*]. (175) The length of every block was 20 cubits, the breadth 10, and the depth five [*f*]; they were so neatly joined to one another that each tower looked like a single natural block cut and polished later by artists' hands into shape and angles, so wholly invisible was the fitting of the joints [*g*].

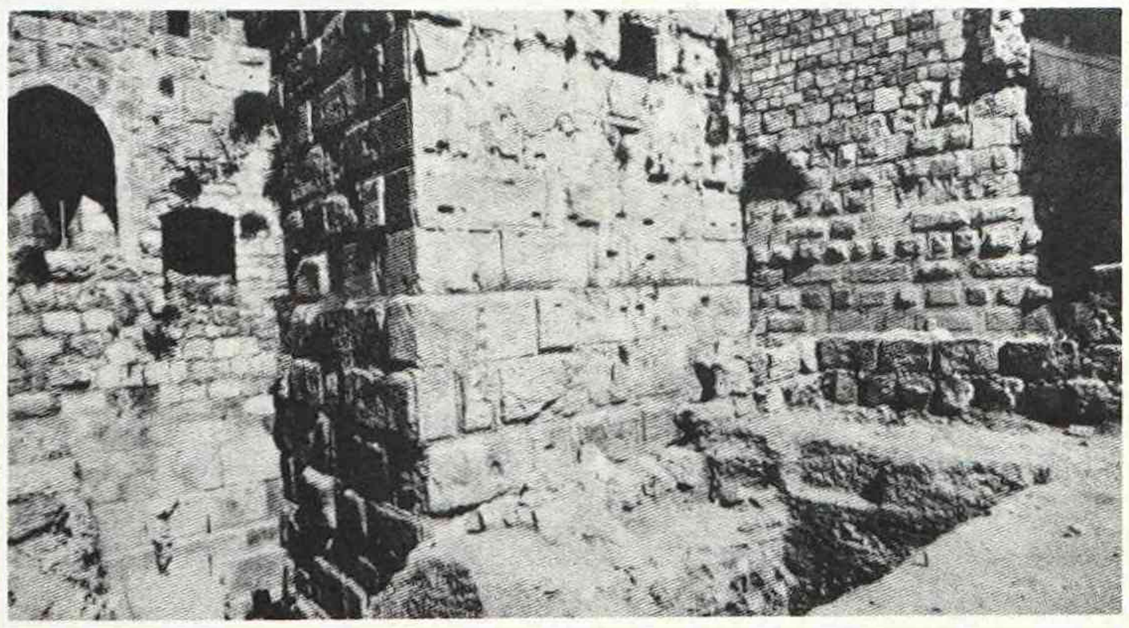
170[*a*] *Mariamme* The site is unknown, possibly east of Phasael. A rebuilt structure, dating to Crusader times, serves today as a historical museum.
170[*b*] 20 cubits—approx. 10 m.
171[*c*] 55 cubits—approx. 27 m.
173[*a*] *Ancient wall* The First Wall of Hasmonean origin, as illustrated.
173[*b*] 30 cubits—approx. 15 m.
173[*c*] In other words, their great height and emplacement in the strategic triangle were most impressive (see illustration).
174[*d*] They bear comparison with the ashlars used in the building of the Temple supporting walls, measuring from 1-3 m., while many were even longer.
174[*e*] *White marble* A type of local limestone known today as Meleki and bearing certain resemblances to marble. It was used for building public and private structures in ancient times.
175[*f*] $10 \times 5 \times 2.5$ m.
175[*g*] "The massive Herodian masonry fit together perfectly without the use of mortar or any other cementing materials. All the edges and surfaces were chiseled with fine precision and bordered in what is regarded as typical of Herodian building style" (B. Mazar, *op. cit.*, p. 121).

The existing remains of the Citadel belong, in the main, to two periods. The shaded areas, with the Phasael tower on the right, mark the Hasmonean and Herodian periods of construction. The white areas mark Crusader and Arab-Turkish construction in medieval times. The Marriamme and Hippicus towers (the shaded areas) left no defined marks of identification



Joint of the Phasael tower and the city First Wall, which preceded it (within the walls of the Citadel). The base of the Phasael is of Hasmonean origin; the Herodian layers were built into and above it (right)





176[*a*] *The king's palace* It stood a little way to the south and was sheltered by the towers. Cf. 182[*a*] below.

177[*b*] 30 cubits—approx. 15 m.

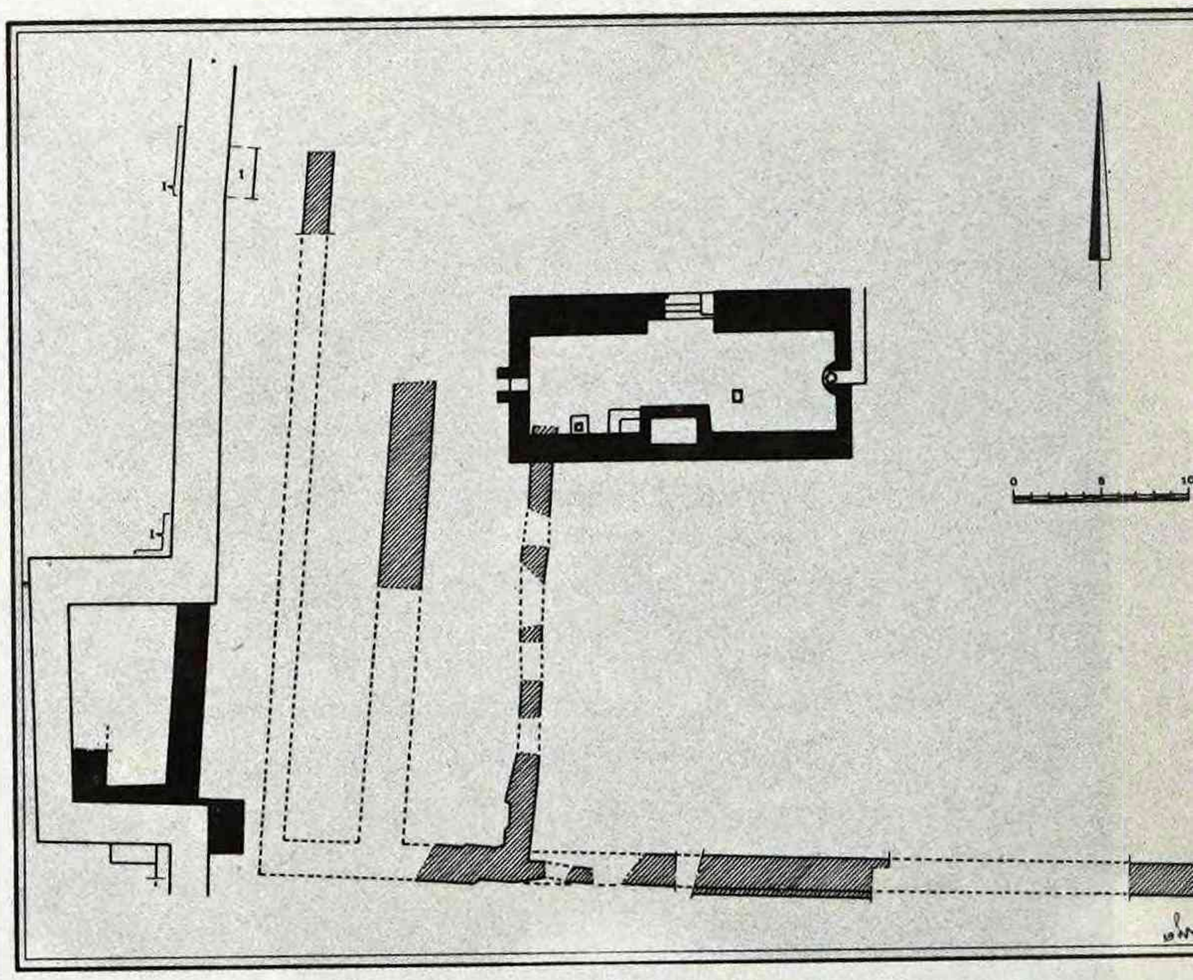
178[*c*] Added to this description, it may be noted that in these decorations were found mosaics of remarkable beauty adorned with geometric patterns whose chief colors were black, red and white, as well as frescoes, as illustrated.

182[*a*] *Description of the palace* Built in 23 BC, Herod's palace occupied an area several times as large as regular blocks in Hellenistic cities. The palace, described by Josephus as having two main wings, has not survived except for the foundation platform or elevated podium on which it stood, discovered by excavations on the site by Magen Broshi and D. Bahat. This gives us a fair idea of the palace's huge dimension but it does not help to recreate its original design. Josephus reports that the two main wings with towering structures were surrounded by parks and gardens. None of this superstructure has survived. We know that they sprawled over more than 4.5 acres stretching through the present Armenian compound and new seminary built over the site of the ancient palace, and that they reached as far as the present city walls, those on the west on the site of the First Wall and those on the south which are not on that site. In building the palace, Herod resorted to the same methods employed in the construction of the Temple enclosure (cf. 188 ff below): raising the area and leveling it off by means of a huge podium which extended over an area of about 930×1080 ft (300×350 meters) from north to south, and some 190 ft (60 m.) at least from west to east. The podium raised the surface by some $10 \times 12^1/_2$ ft above older levels. The eastern limits of the podium are as yet unknown, for the area to the east is occupied by the densely-built Armenian Patriarchate. This sector belonged to the foundations of the palace and to considerable portions of the elevated large podium on which it stood. Nothing remains of the latter, because thirteen centuries later the Crusaders erected over it the *Curia Regis,* their royal palace. A fragment of a tile pipe bearing stamp impression of the Roman tenth legion was recovered. The palace was surrounded by a wall and contained banqueting halls, bedrooms, porticoes, and gardens, decorated, it seems, much as all the other palaces at Jericho, Masada, and Jericho, whose details are known to us from excavations. Architectural remains, such as Corinthian and Ionic capitals, have also been found. The ancient complex was the headquarters of the kingdom throughout Herod's period and that of his successor, Anchelaus, and after AD 6, the palace became the seat of the Roman prefects and procurators while in Jerusalem. Accordingly, this was also the location of the praetorium where Jesus was judged and sentenced by Pilate. (Cf. 146[*b*] above and Philo, *De Legatione ad Gaium,* XXXVIII, 299, and XXXIX, 306.)

183[*b*] *The fire* War II, 430-440, relates that in September 66, the Zealots had set fire to the Antonia stronghold, besieged the Roman garrison in Herod's palace and then burned their camp situated near the three towers and the palace. We learn subsequently that the Zealots in command of the city did not rebuild the turrets or roofs of the towers, or any of their upper structures, as they possessed no strategic value to Simon-bar-Giora who apparently used the Phasael and Hippicus towers as his headquarters (*War* V, 284, 304).

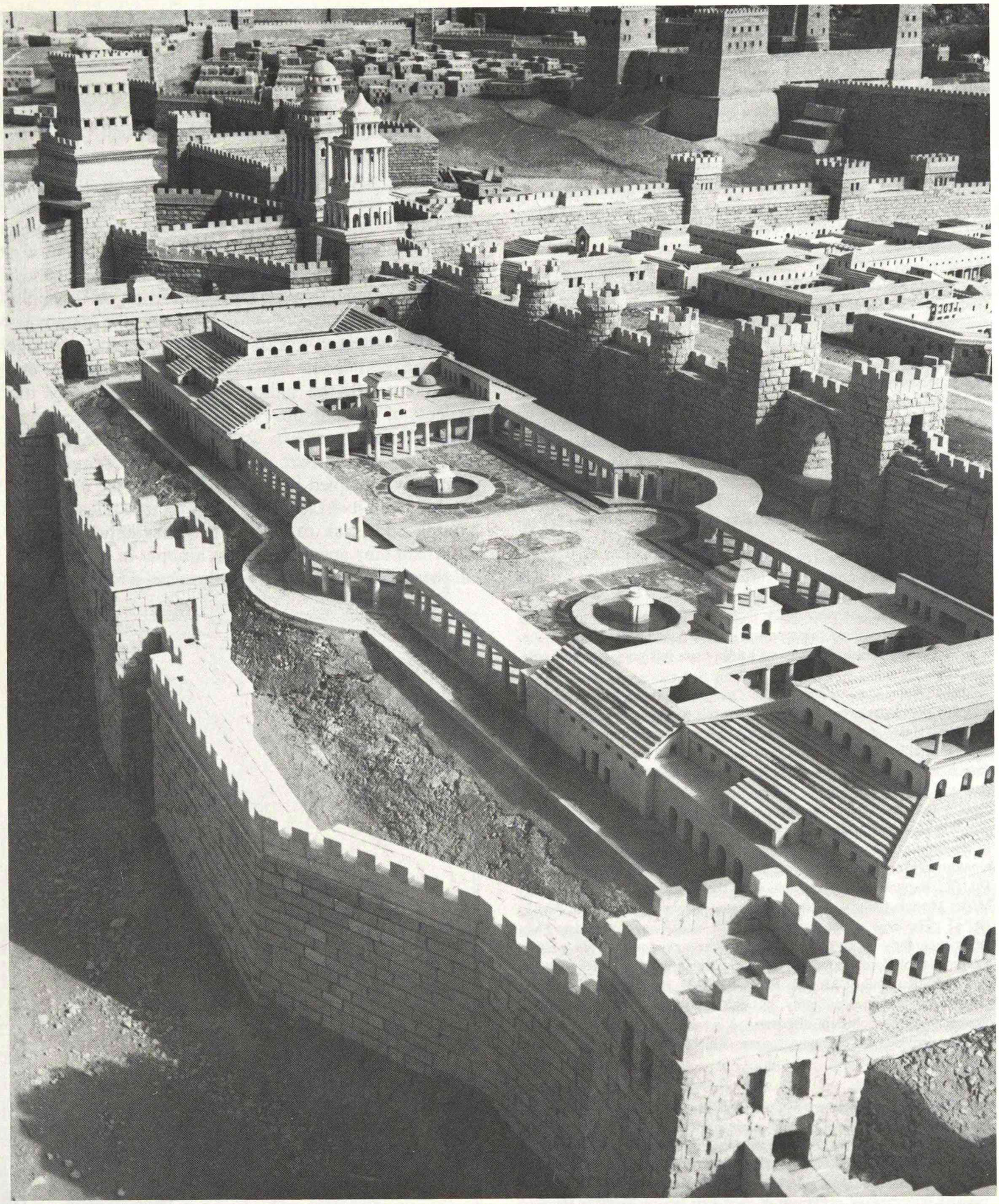
Herod's palace

(176) These towers stood in the northern part of the wall, and adjoining them, and on the inner side was the king's palace [*a*], which baffles all description: (177) its magnificence and equipment were unsurpassable, surrounded as it was on every side by a wall thirty cubits high [*b*], with ornamental towers evenly spaced along it, and containing huge banqueting-halls and bedrooms for a hundred guests. (178) Words cannot express the varied beauty of the stones, for species rare everywhere else were here brought together in quantity. Its ceilings were remarkable for the length of their beams and the splendor of their surface decorations [*c*]; (179) there were numerous apartments all amply furnished, the infinite variety of their designs were prodigious, while most of the objects in each apartment were of silver or gold. (180) All around were numbers of intersecting circular porticoes, the pillars in each differing in their design, with open verdant courts between them crossed by green lawns; (181) coppices of different trees were intersected by long walks bordered by deep canals; ponds were studded throughout with bronze figures from which the water poured, and around the streams were numerous cotes for tame pigeons. (182) However, no words are adequate to portray the palace [*a*]; and the memory of it is harrowing, since it brings to mind the ravages of the brigands' fire. (183) For the palace was not burned to the ground by the Romans, but this was done, as was said already [*b*], by the plotters within the city who at the beginning of the revolt lit a fire at Antonia which spread [*b*] to the palace and consumed the roofs of the three towers.



Excavations in Armenian Garden. ▨ Herodian platform walls; ■ southern wing of Crusader palace; □ Turkish city-wall; I — traces of Hasmonean "First Wall"

Excavations in the Armenian Garden, site of Herod's palace. The shaded paths identify with the Herodian platform walls; the black, with a wing of the Crusader palace; the white, with the Turkish city wall (above the older foundations). I marks traces of the Hasmonean "First Wall" (left): "In building his palace, Herod resorted to the same methods employed in the construction of the Temple enclosure: raising the area and leveling it off by means of a large podium (the shaded area in the sketch). The platform thus created spread from the citadel towers on the north and to the south along the Western city wall. The eastern limits of this platform lie under the densely built Armenian Patriarchate" (M. Broshi, D. Bahat, *Jerusalem Revealed, p. 55)*



Herod's palace, according to M. Avi-Yonah's model of Jerusalem, with view northeastward to the Tower Antonia at the upper right. The palace was situated immediately within the First Wall

184[*a*] *Temple* Josephus appears to refer here to the earlier sanctuary of Solomon as may be deduced from para. 185. It was built on top of Mt. Moriah which sloped considerably on the west, south and east. In this translation, the term "Sanctuary" represents Greek *naos* and denotes the central shrine, while "Temple" represents *hieron* or *temenos* which, in this case, includes the whole complex of outer courts, their porticoes and retaining walls which surrounded the vast Temple Mount esplanade, the present Haram-es-Sherif, whose exposed surface and (unexplored) underground structures, south of the massive octagonal Islamic shrine, have survived to the present time (cf. 188 ff.).

185[*b*] *What area and built-up ground did the First Temple occupy?* We know little more than Josephus about the area occupied by Solomon's Temple. Any surviving remains of it, as well as the adjoining House of the "Forest of Lebanon" and "Porch of Justice," may lie buried beneath the present Muslim sanctuary, Haram-es-Sherif. This temple, which stood on the highest eminence of Mount Moriah, was situated in the center of a court (I Kings 7, 12) surrounded by a thick wall, which included the two other edifices that stood north of it "on the embankment" of the hilltop (see S. Yeivin's diagram). The cross-section of the area west of Mt. Moriah illustrated here (*Mazar*, p. 99) shows in *B* the approximate early position of the First Temple complex across the *eastern* side of the Tyropoeon valley, while *A* marks the latest position occupied by the retaining wall of the Herodian temple complex and the building area abutting it on the west. This came—as a result of Herod's plans—very close to abandoned ancient tombs which belonged to the latest phase of the Judaean kingdom. This lends substance to Josephus' statement "the flat hilltop by this leveling was widened" (see also 188[*c*] below).

185[*c*] *"The sanctuary remained exposed"* An obscure statement: long before Herod's time, the sanctuary hill and its slopes were exposed on other sides. The Hasmoneans are known to have erected embankments and walls on the western side facing the Tyropoeon and the Lower City and to have built up this area and erected public edifices such as the Xystus, the Buleterion, as well as a bridge from this area to the Temple Mount.

185[*d*]-186[*e*] Simultaneously, the "people" apparently leveled and quarried the slopes around the sanctuary hill during several generations preceding Herod, until they leveled an area enough to include the "inner" and "second" courts described in para. 190, 193-195. But contrary to Josephus' statement in para. 185, this process long succeeded Solomon's time and that of the Judaean Monarchy. *Middoth* II, written in the 2nd century BC, in referring to the post-Solomonic period, relates that the people made a breach in the northern wall and included an area as large as the whole circumference of the inner or holy courts. In fact, the greatest leveling work on Temple Mount was effected in Herod's time.

186[*f*] Expansion was possible over the northern exposed slope of Mount Moriah, namely, north of the present Islamic Dome of the Rock.

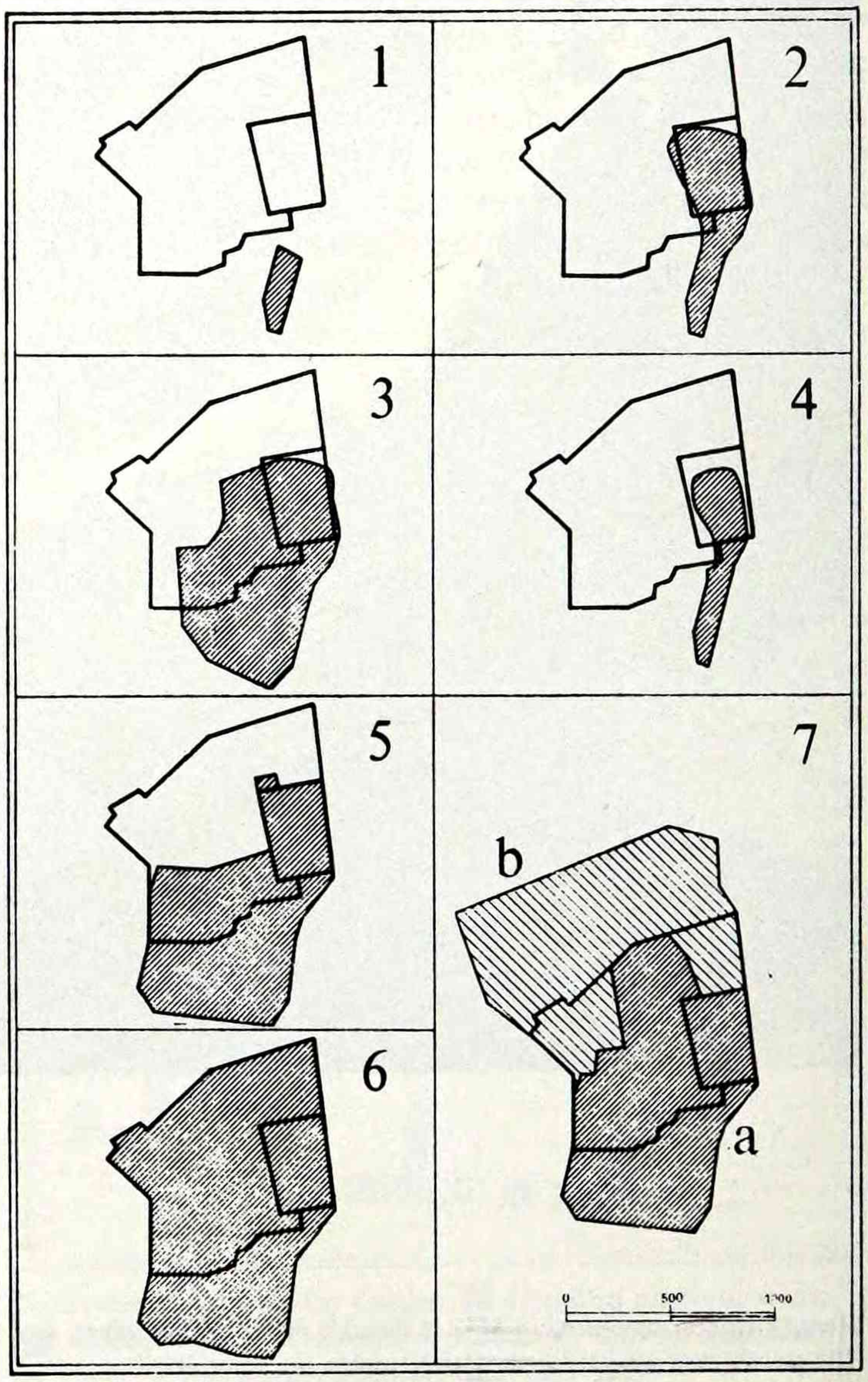
187[*a*] *The area of the esplanade; with a wall on three sides* This refers apparently both to the northern expansion and to the area created by the vast platform supported by the retaining walls on three sides of the precipitious hill of Moriah. Paras. 186-187 are obscure and cover ground debated since antiquity, but this topography is fortunately illumined by archaeological discovery. A wealth of information on this point is provided in Talmudic sources which usefully supplement the

C. DESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPLE

Chapter V

1. Expansion of the Temple Mount

(184) Though the Temple [*a*], as stated earlier, was built on a strong hill [*a*], the level area on its summit originally was hardly spacious enough for the sanctuary [*a*] and altar, the ground around it being precipitous and steep. (185) King Solomon, who was the actual founder of the sanctuary, having walled up the eastern side, erected a single portico on this built-up ground [*b*]; on the other sides the sanctuary remained exposed [*c*]. In the course of time, through the constant additions of the people to the embankment [*d*], the hilltop was widened [*d*] by this process of levelling-up. (186) Later, the people made a breach in the northern wall [*e*] and thus took in an area as large as that which the whole Temple subsequently occupied [*f*]. (187) Then, having closed off the hill from its base with a wall on three sides [*a*], and completed a task to stagger the imagination—a task on which they spent an endless amount of time [*a*] and all their sacred treasures—replenished as they were by



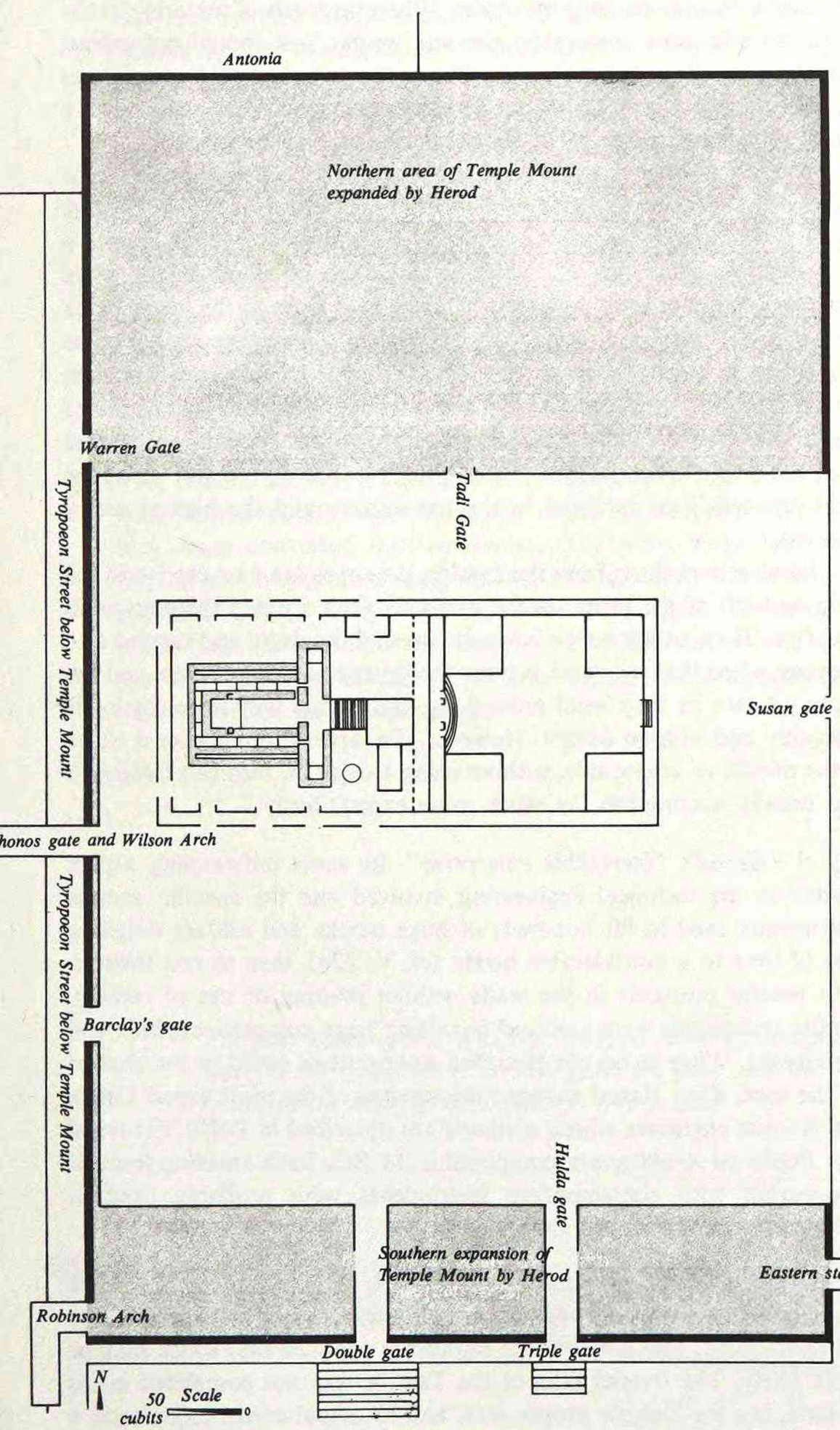
The "three walls" mentioned by Josephus (paras. 142-145 above) can be illustrated by this concise graphic comment of the topographical history of Jerusalem. Square No. 1 shows the original Jebusite townlet captured by King David at the end of the 11th century BC. Nos. 2 and 4 indicate Solomon's expansion over the Temple Mount, incorporating No. 1. Nos. 3 and 5 illustrate the expansion of the "most ancient wall" in Hasmonean and Herodian times. In No. 5 the horizontal line cutting across the city is the Second Wall. *It was not visible later as in 6–7. The outlines of 6 indicate the expansion after Herod's time, namely, the period of the war with Rome. By then the city had expanded north and it included the Northern Quarter and Bezetha (Bethesda). The latter areas would be found north of the air-view map shown on page 334 (top right). Hence (a) in 7 represents the area up to stage 6, and (b) the post-Herodian years when northern Jerusalem was surrounded by the Third Wall*

tributes sent from every corner of the world [*b*] as a gift to God—they built both the upper courts and the lower temple courts around the original block.

Magnitude of the foundations

(188) They had to build the lower enclosure [*a*], where its foundations were lowest, from a depth of 300 cubits [*b*], and in some spots even more. The whole depth of the foundations was, however, not apparent, as they filled up the ravines for the most part in order to level the narrow alleys of the town below [*c*]. (189) Blocks of stones 40 cubits long [*a*] were used in the building; for the lavish contributions [*b*] and popular enthusiasm led to incredible enterprise [*c*]; a task seemingly endless was actually completed through perseverance and after the lapse of many years [*d*].

The Temple Mount esplanade and its components



author's data. Such are the partial, specific descriptions contained in *Middoth* I, Mishna II, 4, 9, *Middoth* II, 1 and various other sources, which were addressed to a purely Jewish audience and were intended to perpetuate the minutest details of place and ritual in the hope of an eventual restoration of the Temple in all its former glory. Josephus' data was based on personal observation and a serious regard for accuracy. Admittedly, discrepancies between Josephus, *Middoth,* and recent archaeological discovery are in certain respects considerable, but it is no less true that excavations at the foot of the Temple Mount conducted by B. Mazar since 1968—using Josephus as a guide—have found him to be generally trustworthy. *Middoth* II, 1 gives the Temple Mount an area of 500 × 500 cubits, or 77,000 square yards (approx. 16 acres or 62,500 sq. meters) but this seems to reflect an ancient tradition based primarily on the prophet Ezekiel's blueprint of the ideal temple of the future (45, 2). This more limited area of the Temple Mount refers apparently to that which lay within the *Soreg* (inner courts), the sacred area which did not include the large outer courts. Josephus gives the total circumference of the whole temple enclosure as 6 stadia or 3,600 ft (1,110 m; the stadia is 667 ft long). This again is smaller than the area of the present Islamic Haram-es-Sherif esplanade restored by the Arabs since the 8th century AD. The latter measures some 5,150 ft (1,650 m.) in circumference (or 142,000 sq. m.). This discrepancy is the more remarkable considering the fact that the Islamic esplanade covers Jewish remains still lying underground and most of the area corresponding to Josephus' measurements, or possibly over a somewhat larger area.

187[*b*] *Tributes, dues, tithes* During the centuries of the Second Temple period, every Jew paid his half-shekel and shekel dues, and in addition, many—among the tens of thousands of pilgrims, beside their "redemption-money," brought free-will offerings of gold and silver towards the embellishment and enrichment of the Temple. Philo's brother, Alexander of Alexandria, had the nine gates of the inner courts of the Temple plated with gold, and Nicanor donated the bronze gate named after him. Queen Helena and King Monobazus of Adiabene presented various articles of gold to the Temple (V. 201-206; M. Yoma 3, 10; 4, 4). Donations had been pouring in for well over a century before Herod's time and were to enlarge the Temple and its courts. In addition every Jew brought his tithe (tenth of his crop) to the priests.

188[*a*] The "lower enclosure" refers to the area bordering the outer Temple courts.

188[*b*] 300 cubits—approx. 150 m.

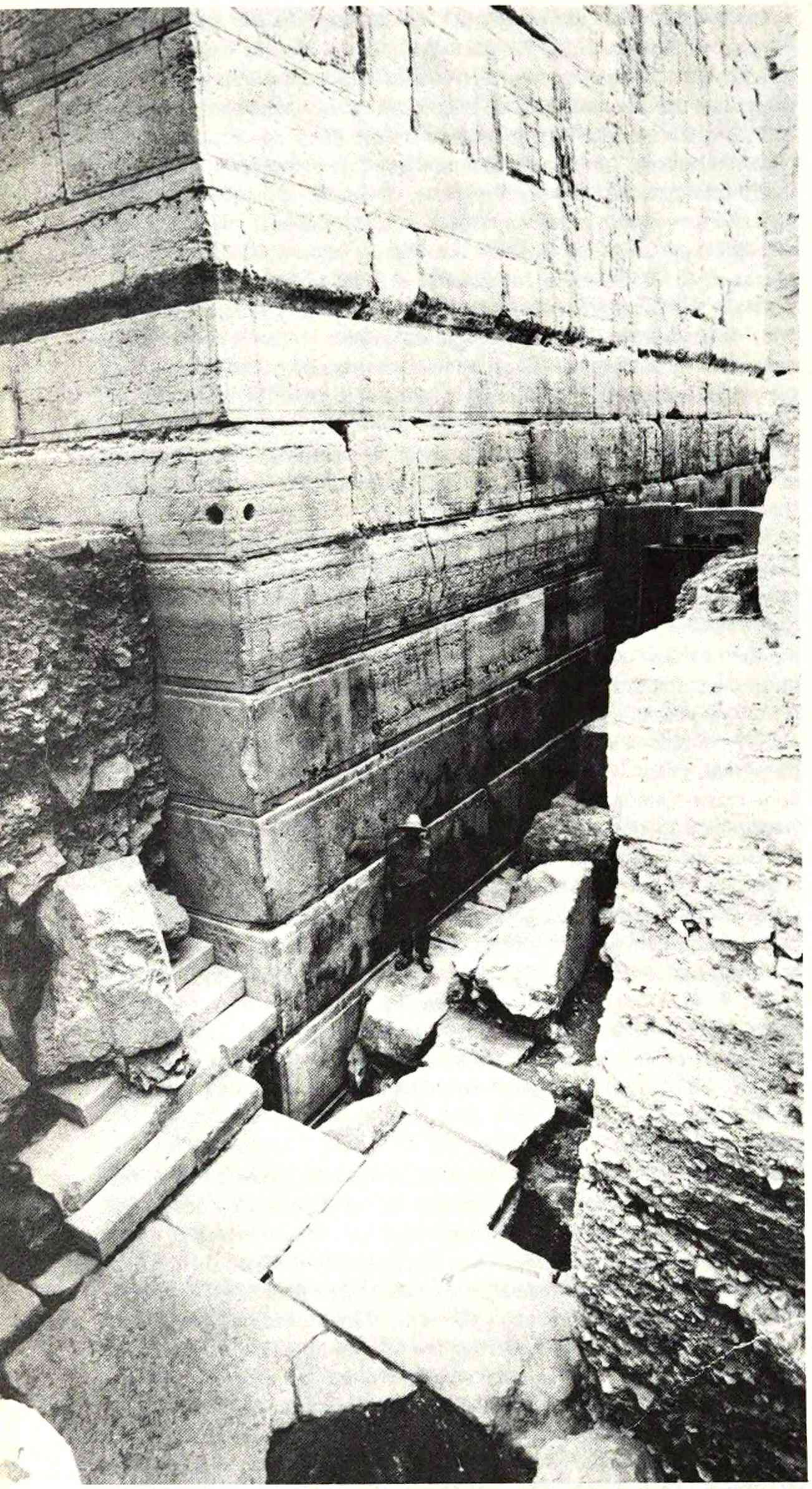
188[*c*] *And the town below* As stated, long before Herod's time, the level of the Tyropoeon embankments in the Lower City had been gradually lowered as the area was built up. Herod's master plan, however, envisaged two phases: first, he apparently deviated the slope of the valley west of the Temple Mount (called "the ravine" (188[*d*]), built up the slopes and valleys flanking the earlier Mount, and dug foundation trenches to bedrock, then supporting the fill with huge retaining walls of the Temple Mount. The second phase involved the expansion of the southern area of the Mount by eliminating its steep slope through a complicated and elaborate system of vaults, some of which we know as the so-called Solomon Stables (now lying under the southeastern esplanade). This is why the retaining walls surviving in the southwestern and southeastern areas are so high and rise to a height of 145 and 110 ft above bedrock. At the southwestern corner 25 courses of ashlars rise to the top compared with the 35 courses at the southeastern corner (the "pinnacle"; Matt. 4, 5).

189[*a*] *Magnitude of the stones* 40 cubits—approx. 20 m.

189[*b*] Cf. 187[*b*].

189[*c*] and [*d*] *Incredible enterprise* This involved the judicious use of technical hoisting devices suggested by Virtuvius, the Roman architect and engineer of the 1st century AD already mentioned in War I 408-414, in reference to the building of the outer harbor at Caesarea. Chapter Two of Vitruvius Book X *(De Architecture)* has this to say about the standard procedures, as well as the extraordinary hoisting machines (which may have been used in Jerusalem):

"1. We will deal with machines required on hand where vast temples and public buildings are to be constructed. Two timbers must be provided, strong enough to withstand the weight of the load, and they must be fastened together at the upper end by a *bolt;* then they are spread apart at the bottom, thus set up and kept upright by ropes attached at the up-



The huge size of the Herodian stones and the ancient pavement southwest of the Temple Mount

per ends and fixed at suitable intervals all round. A block is fastened at the top (called "rechamus" by some). Two sheaves (grooved pulleys of a pulley block) are enclosed in the block, turning on axles. The traction rope is carried over the top sheave, then let fall and passed around the sheave in the block below. It is then brought back to the sheave at the bottom of the upper block and thus goes down to the lower block; it is fastened there through a hole in the block. The other end of the block is pulled back and down through the legs of the hoisting machine.

"2. *Socket-pieces* are nailed to the hinder faces of the squarred timbers at point where they are placed apart; the ends of the *windlass* are also inserted into them. Two holes are made close to the *windlass* so that the axles may turn freely and so adjusted that the handspikes can be fitted into them. *Shears* made of iron are fastened to the bottom of the lower block, and their *prongs* are brought to bear upon the *stones*. The latter must have *suitable holes* bored into them (see illustration). As one end of the rope fastens to the *windlass*—and the latter is turned around by working the hand spikes—the rope winds round the *windlass, becomes tightly drawn,* and thus raises the heavy loads to the height desired in the work.

"3. This machine, revolving with the three sheaves is called *trispatos;* when there are two sheaves turning in the block beneath, and three in the upper, the machine is called *pentapos*. However, when we must provide machines for heavier loads, we should use timbers of greater length and thickness, and be sure to provide them with corresponding large bolts at the top, as well as *windlasses* turning at the bottom. When these are provided, let forestays be attached, then left lying slack in front; carry the backstays over the shoulders of the machine—to some distance; if there is nothing to which they may be fastened, sloping piles must by driven, the ground rammed down hard all round to fix them firmly, and the ropes made fast to them.

"4. A block should then be attached by very stout cord to the top of the machine and from that point a rope be carried to the pile. The ropes should be put in around the sheave of this block, then brought back to the block that is fastened to the top (of the machine). The rope should be passed round its sheave, and should then go down from the top—and back to the *windlass,* which is at the bottom of the machine; it should then be fastened. The *windlass* must now be turned by means of hand-spikes, and it will raise the machine without any danger. A machine of the larger type will thus be set in position, with its ropes in their place about it, and its stays attached to the piles. Its blocks traction-ropes are arranged as described above.

"5. *Extraordinary hoisting machines*. Wherever loads of material for the work are still more colossal in size and weight, one should not entrast them to a *windlass,* but set in an axle-tree that is to be held by sockets as was the *windlass* and carries on its center a large drum; some call it a wheel, but the Greeks call it *Amphireucin,* or *Peritrochon.*

"6. The blocks in such machines are arranged in a different manner; for the rows of sheaves in them are doubled at the bottom as well as the top. The traction rope is passed through the hole in the lower block in such a way that the two ends of the rope would be of equal length when stretched out; and both portions are to be held there at the lower block by a cord that is passed round them and lashed so that they cannot come out either to the right or to the left. The ends of this rope are then brought up into the block at the top—from the outside—and passed down over its lower sheaves, and so return to the bottom, are passed from the inside to the sheaves in the lowest block, then brought up on the right and left, then returned to the top and around the highest set of sheaves.

"7. Passing over these from the outside, the ropes are then carried to the right and left of the drum on the axle-tree, then are tied there so as to stay fast. Then another rope is wound around the drum and carried to a capstan; when that is turned, it turns the drum and the axle-tree, and the ropes get taut as they wind around regularly; thus they raise the loads smoothly and with no danger. However, if a larger drum is placed either in the middle or at one side, without using a capstan, men can tread in it and usually accomplish the work more expeditiously."

189[*c*] *Herod's "incredible enterprise"* Its most outstanding aspect resided in the technical engineering involved and the specific ancient instruments used to lift hundreds of huge blocks and ashlars weighing tens of tons to a considerable height (cf. V, 224), then to rest them in their precise positions in the walls without jointing or use of cement. Similar techniques were involved in raising huge columns, capitals and architraves. While hundreds of skilled stone-cutters could be marshalled on the spot, King Herod engaged the services of the most expert Greek and Roman engineers whose methods are described in Pollio Virtuvius' *Ten Books on Architecture* composed c. 14 BC. Such amazing feats of engineering with contemporary instruments were probably used in Palestine as well and are illustrated below.

189[*d*] *"The lapse of many years"* War I, 401 informs us that work was begun in the fifteenth year of Herod's reign (23 BC) but according to *Antiquities* XV, 389 it was in the eighteenth year (20 BC) which may be more likely. The overall plan of the Temple was not completed in his lifetime, but the Temple proper was, and its actual construction took a

year and a half. The Royal Portico was built at about the same time over a period of eight years (*Antiq.* XV, 420).

189[*e*] *The gates of the Temple Mount and magnitude of the shrine* At this point of an archaeological commentary on the composition and appearance of the Temple Mount compound—and before proceeding to the author's description of the inner courts and porticoes (see below para. 190 ff) it is most opportune to describe the *gates* which were built over the Master course of the supporting walls, below the upper esplanade, as detailed in *Antiquities* XV, 410-411. These gates opened under their porticoes and regulated the vast inflow and outflow of myriads of worshipers. Hence, the framework of gates and porticoes will round up the overall picture of the sanctuary, esplanade and courts, before we proceed with the details of the Inner Courts and their structures.

1. What were the gates of the Western Wall?

Josephus mentions four gates in his description of the Western Wall (*Antiq.* XV, 410). He says the southernmost gate leads down by "means of many steps" to the Tyropoeon vale; and it is possible to reach the Upper City from there. The "many steps" must refer to the monumental stairway to the Robinson Arch and the great pier at its foot (see illustration). A paved road ascended from this pier at a westerly direction; it wound over a series of vaulted structures built of small well-edged masonry stones. This road led to the Upper City on the Western hill. The whole arrangement is entirely in harmony with the plan of the area in Herodian times.

Where were the other three gates described by Josephus? One of them, now called Barclay's gate after the British architect who discovered it in mid-19th century AD, is most likely the gate mentioned in the Mishna, *Middot* 1, 3, as the *Kiphonos* (Coponius) gate; "There are five gates to the Temple: the Hulda gates in the south which serve for entry and exit, the Kiphonos gate in the west which served for entry and exit..." Its inner gate is still in fair state of preservation, though hidden and overlaid by various Isalmic obstructions. Its tremendous single-stone sill, 25 feet high (7.5 × 2.1 m.), rests on the master course of the Western Wall, that is, at the level of the thresholds of several of its gates. This gateway (opening) is 28.7 feet (8.75 m.) high, but the threshold is missing. The Kiphonos gate sill can still be seen, part of it from the outside and southern end of the Western Wall section popularly called the Wailing Wall, south of the area now reserved for women's worship. The buried gateway abuts, inside, on an abandoned mosque called *El Buraq*.

Inside the gate, there was once a vestibule which is now blocked by a wall. Behind the wall a passage led through one or two ancient cisterns with vaulted roofs, which are situated under the Haram platform. Before they were converted into reservoirs, they were stone hallways and formed an underground ramp leading in a southerly direction from the Kiphonos gate to the upper courts of the Temple area. The ramp and remains are illustrated in our diagram. The interior of the Kiphonos (Barclay) gate, now blocked, represents another archaeological link with the remains of the Temple courts.

A third gate in the Western Wall stood over the eastern side of the causeway (the Wilson Arch) which linked the Upper City to the Western Portico of the Temple Mount and brought water from springs near Hebron. The fourth gate, whose name is also not mentioned in the ancient records, is the so-called "Warren Gate" named after its discoverer. It is situated north of the Wilson Arch.

2. The elusive fourth gate

Warren identified the site of the gate with the ancient cistern marked No. 30 in the map of the Temple esplanade. The rectangular-shaped cistern lay athwart and east of the supporting Western Wall. The presumed gate would have stood above the level of the Tyropoeon Street which led to the gates of the Western Wall; it would also lead through a rising ramp to the esplanade (and through a passage which became the cistern). We have noted a similar architectural feature in the Kiphonos gate. A hundred years after Warrren, a long underground gallery was dug up by the Israel Ministry of Religions along the outer side of the Western Wall leading north from the public prayer area of the Wilson Arch. Then an interesting stone structure was unearthed at a lower point of the gallery, situated approximately under the *Bab-el Mat'hara* and the medieval Arab Madrasat Osmaniyeh building. The structure consisted of the top-right curve of a walled-up arch within the huge Herodian Western retaining wall of the Temple area. This suggests the former existence of a large stone gate at this spot and its position corresponds with the level at which the other Western gates stand on their thresholds. This vestige may well be the outer entrance to the so-called Warren gate which leads into a ramp (since closed and passing through the cistern marked 30). The existence of the four gates of the Western Wall, as described by Josephus, had been confirmed and the gates themselves identified correctly through archaeological investigation. Two of them led to the porticoes: the *Royal Portico* beginning at the gate now identified with the Robinson Arch, and the Western Portico over the Wilson Arch. The other two (the Barclay and Warren gates) led from the paved street which bordered the Western Wall, into underground passages below the Western portico, and from there upward, through ramps, to the courts of the Temple.

3. Magnitude of the shrine

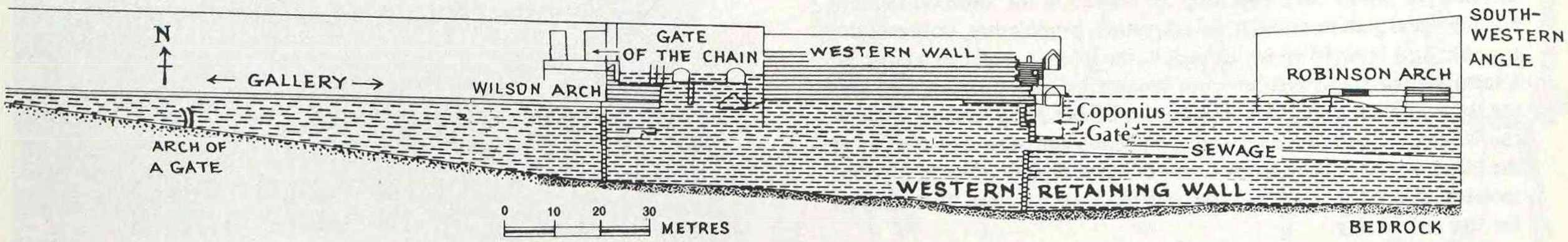
When we compare the Jerusalem shrine with other sanctuaries in the eastern part of the Graeco-Roman world, we find that the area of the *temenos,* a complex of sacred structures surrounded by walls, exceeded by far other famous sanctuaries. The *temenos* of Jerusalem was three and a half times as large as that of *Jupiter Heliopolitanus* at Baalbek (Lebanon) which incorporated the temple of Astarte-Venus as well. It is also worth noting that the *Forum Romanum* in Rome erected by Emperor Trajan was only half as large as the area of the Temple Mount.

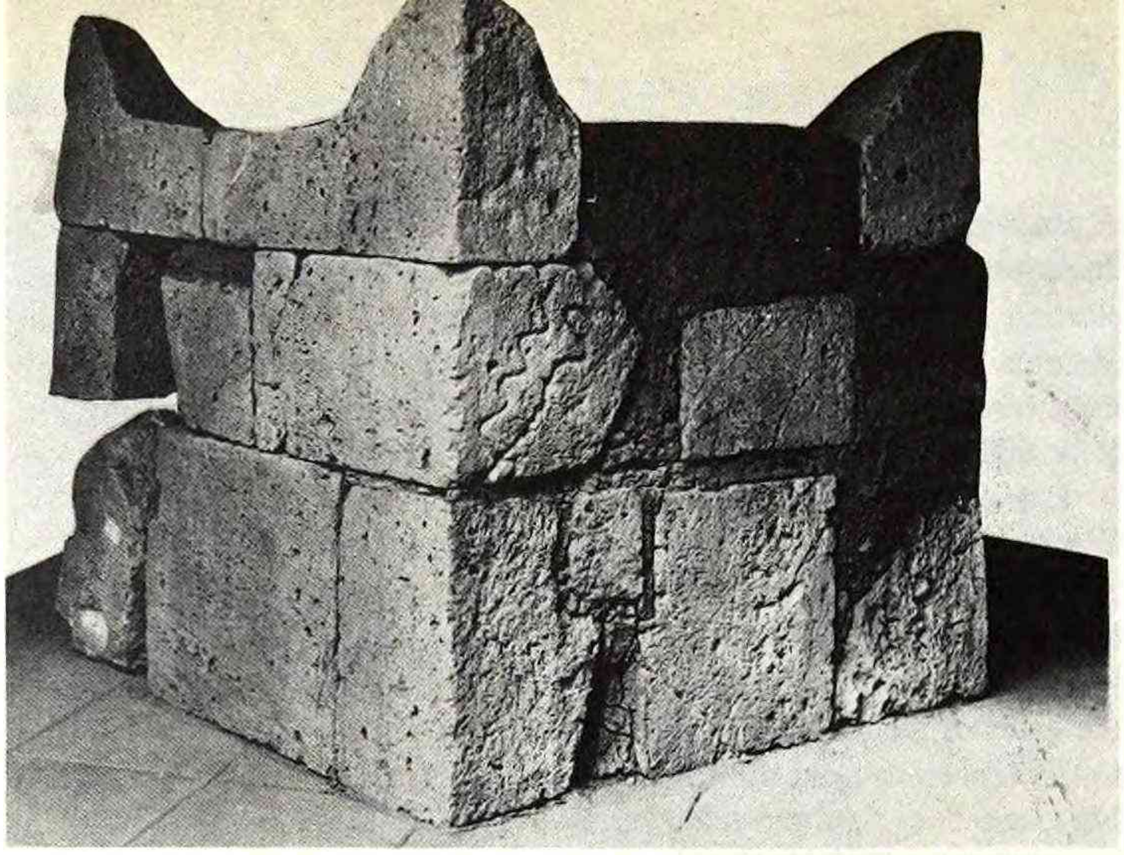
190[*a*]-190[*b*] Herodian masonry, the porticoes and outer courts were of equal magnificence.

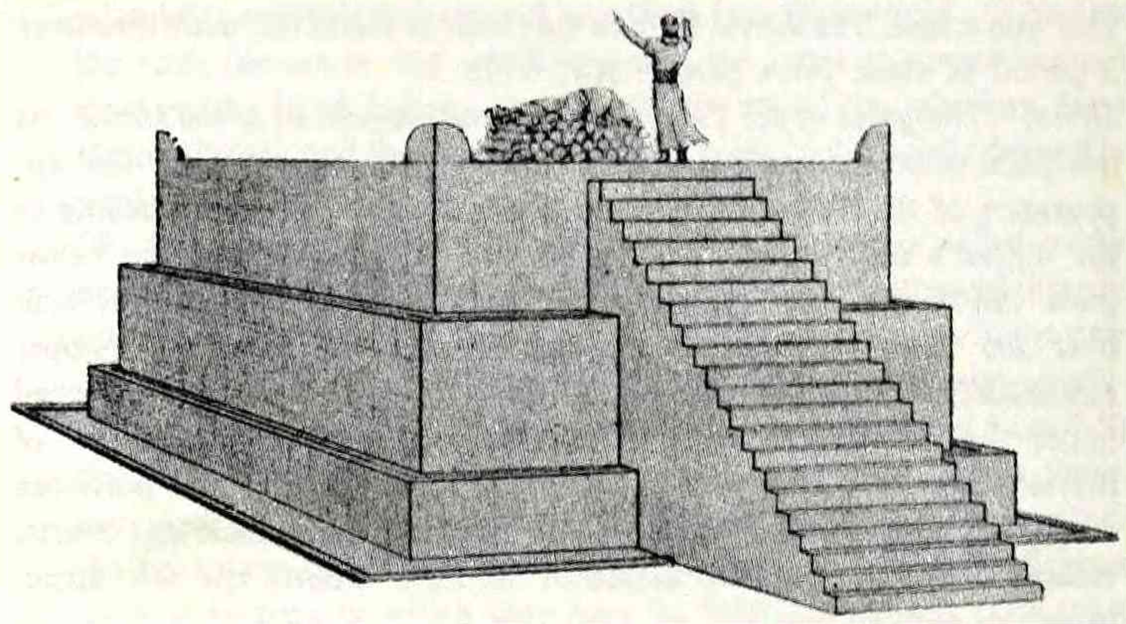
190[*c*] 25 cubits—approximately 13 m. high.

190[*d*] Brought from the Lebanon and the Taurus range in southern Asia Minor.

The four gates of the Western Wall, as listed by Josephus, are: from right to left, the gate over the Robinson Arch, reached by "many stairs"; the Coponius (Barclay) gate; the gate over the Wilson Arch; and, finally, the top section of an arch, probably the fourth gate, found in an underground gallery. *See p. 353*



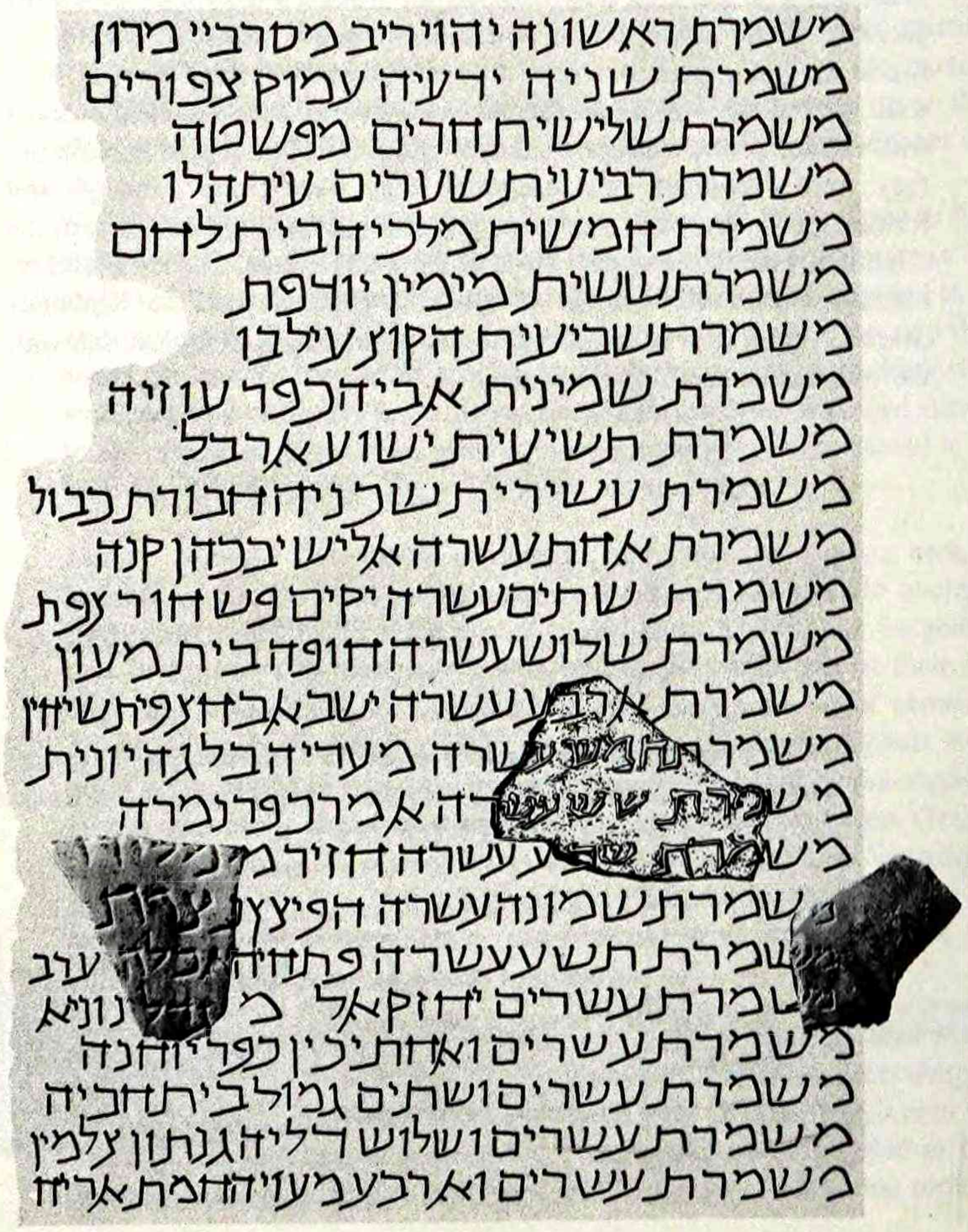




Presumed reconstruction of the great altar of burnt offerings, which stood a little east of the sanctuary
The large altar was 32 cubits square (approx. 15-16 sq. m.) Nearby stood the slaughterhouse and the tables upon which the offerings were prepared. Around the court facing the Temple to the east were the storerooms for materials required for the ritual. To the west of the altar was the large Court of the Women, with rooms at each corner for Nazirites who had taken certain vows, as for lepers, and also to store wood and olive oil

This commentary to Book V of *War* runs parallel, in many historical and structural respects, to the tractates *Middot* and *Tamid* of the Mishna which deal with Temple ritual and other material subjects connected with same. An item which Josephus refers to quite incidentally is the *daily sacrificial ritual;* this is a subject which he took for granted at the time—but it is now only a haunting memory. The ritual began before the break of dawn while the whispering hot embers of the constant fire on the altar were barely audible. The priests came from their quarters which were underground lit by clay lamps placed in niches of the walls) after their purification; they then passed in two groups through the portals to the "Chamber of Hewn Stone" *(Lishkat Hagazit)* where they stood in a circle; then lots were drawn for the various duties. The elder then bade a priest to go up to one of the towers surrounding the inner courts and asked him: "Did the light of dawn in the east spread as far as Hebron (to the south)?" When he was answered in the affirmative, he ordered a ewe-lamb to be brought up from the pen of ewe-lambs in the Chamber of the Hearth. It was immolated, cut up and drawn on the marble slaughterhouse tables situated north of the altar. The priests proceeded once more to the *Lishkat Hagazit* to pronounce the first three verses of the benediction, *"Shema Yisrael"* (Hear, O Israel, Judaism's confession of faith proclaiming the absolute unity of God as prescribed in Deuter. 6, 4). Lots were drawn twice more, once to decide who would carry the censers and spread incense over the altar, and once to choose who would place the sections of the sacrificial lamb, first over the lower gradients of the ascent leading up to the high altar, and eventually to the altar itself. A priest hurled a *magrefa* (a gonglike musical instrument the like of which is preserved in the Armenian Convent in Jerusalem) towards the middle of the court between the altar and portal of the Temple; the tremendous clatter alerted all priests and Levites in the area to attend morning song and the communal sacrifices. The lay worshippers assembled in the Court of Israel (see chart) and near the entrance to the inner court. The ninety-three officiating priests stood in a group south of the altar carrying censers, torches, fire-pans, tongs, and other paraphernalia, and blessed the worshippers in the ineffable name of Yahweh. Libations of wine were poured for the meal oblation and pancakes for the high priests. As the officiating priest bent to pour the libation, the deputy high priests raised a standard and signaled ben-Arza, the leader of the Levitic band, to strike the cymbals, and the priests to blow the silver trumpets. The Levites intoned the prescribed daily psalm and portions of the Law (Torah). As they finished each verse, they stopped and the priests repeated the blowing of trumpets. The worshippers bowed in prayer (Mishna, *Tamid* 7,13). The ceremonial lasted several hours and was impressive and awe-inspiring to the people. While the ministering priests attended to the sacrifices, other priests blew the trumpets as the choir of Levites sang to the accompaniment of the band of instruments (Tamid, chaps. 1-7, and other Talmudic references). After the morning services, the priests were kept busy for the rest of the forenoon sacrificing individual guilt or sin offerings (expiatory, propitiatory, or thanksgiving offerings) brought up by the people; the offering might be a lamb, or a turtledove or young pigeons when brought by a poor person, who told the priest his own tale of woe. The women did not go beyond the limits of the Women's Court (see map), while the lepers and other sick stopped at the Nikanor gate leading to the Court of Israel as their offering were immolated, skinned or feathered, and sacrificed on the altar. This went on for the rest of day.

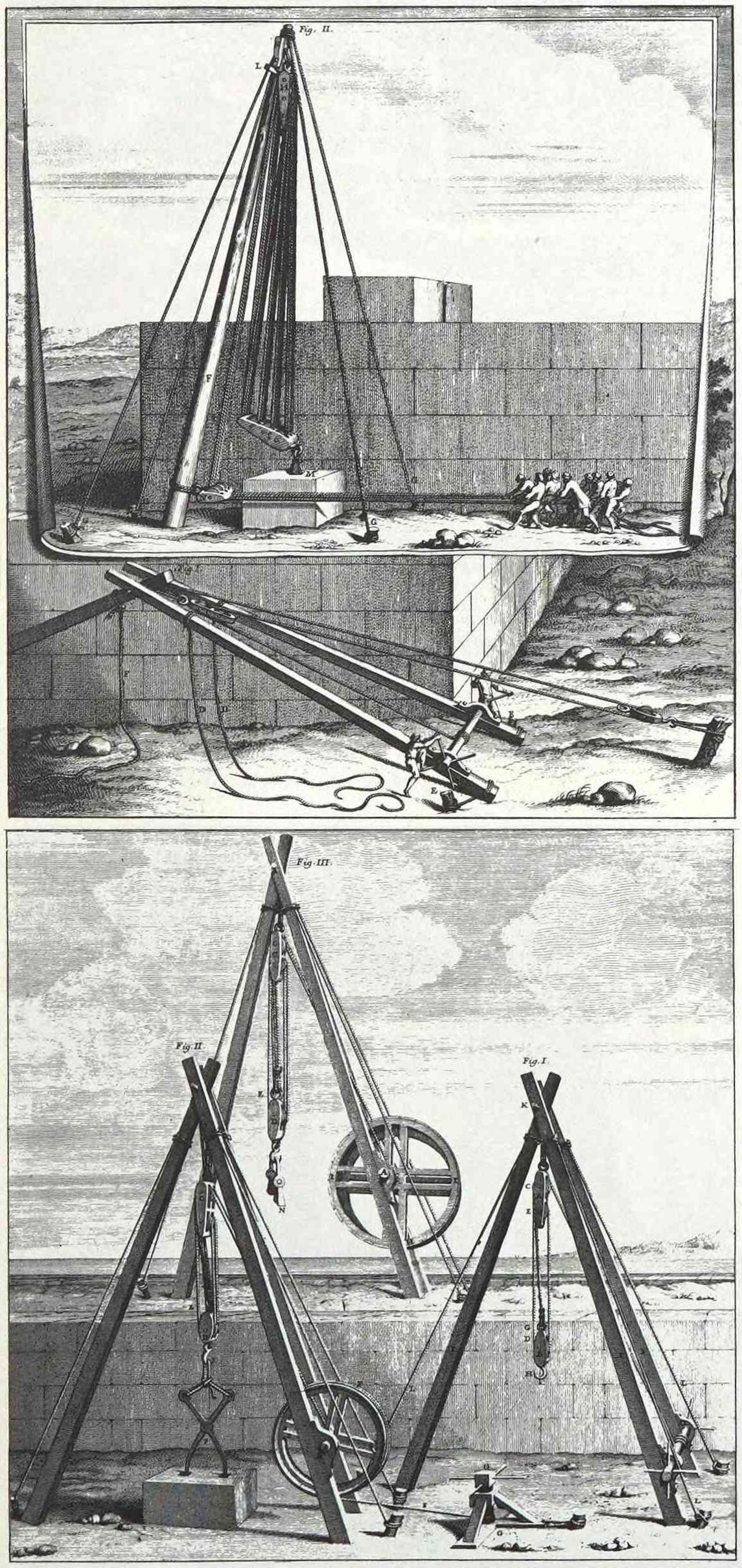
Mishmarot: The requirements of the Temple ritual necessitated the division of the priests into twenty divisions—mishmarot—*each division conducting the ritual for a week in turn. This table enumerates twenty-four divisions from different parts of the country. The priest Eaniachin (*War *IV, 155) of Aphthia was a member of such a mishmeret and was chosen high priest by casting of lots*



2. The porticoes and outer court

(190) Nor were the superstructures of the sanctuary unworthy of such foundations [*a*]. The porticoes [*b*], all erected in double rows, were supported by columns 25 cubits high [*c*]—cut from single blocks of the purest white marble—and the ceiling was paneled with cedar [*d*]. (191) The natural magnificence of these columns, their excellent polish and accurate jointing, afforded a striking spectacle, without any added ornament of painting or carving. (192) The porticoes were 30 cubits [*a*] wide and the complete circuit of them

In the 17th century AD draughtsmen who drew these diagrams were in the habit of including diagram (Fig) II or diagram (Fig) III at the upper corner of the original figure (instead of drawing them apart, at their side)



192[*a*] 30 cubits—approx. 15 m.

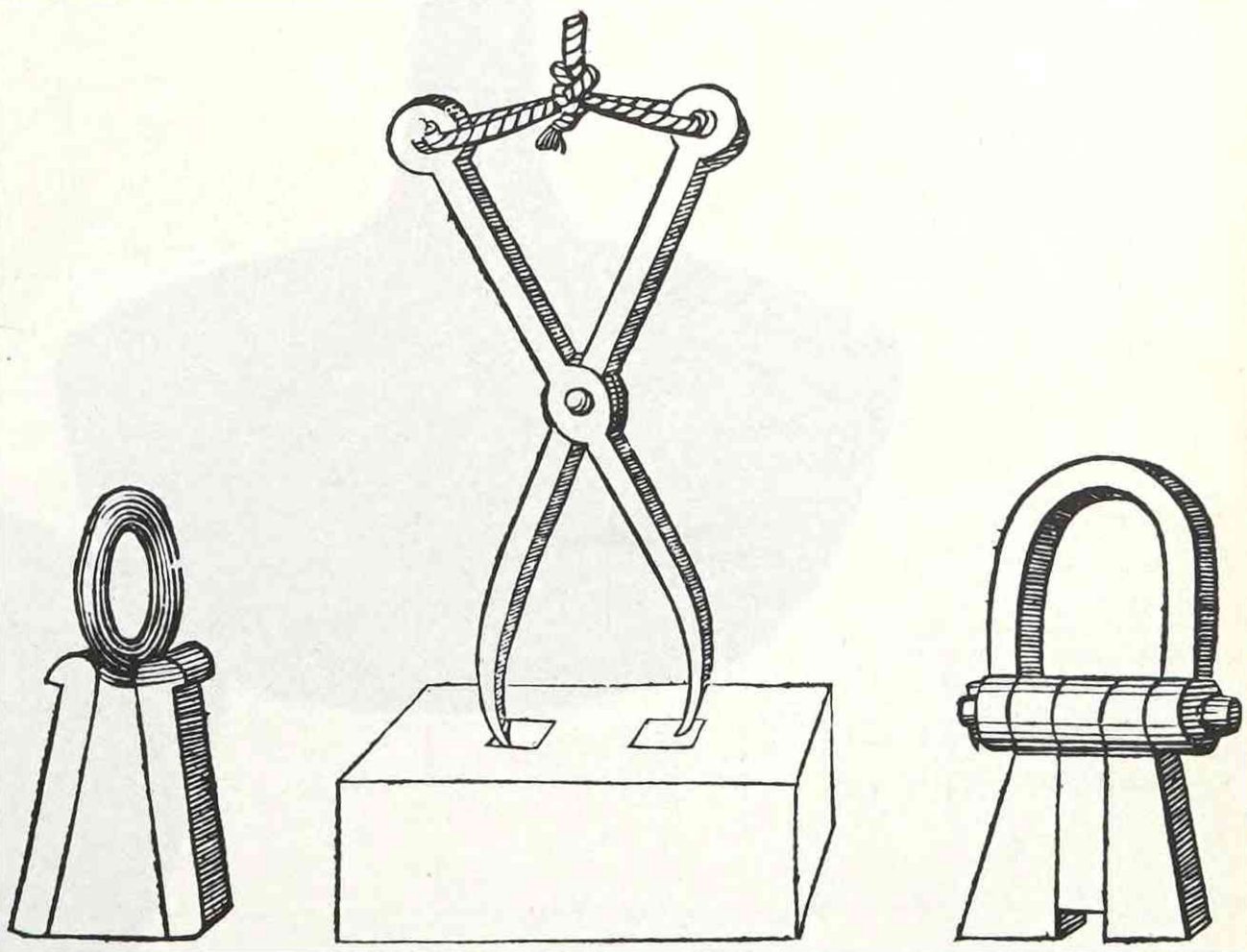
192[*b*] Six furlongs—1.2 kms.

192[*c*] The extent of the wide open-air esplanade's measurements are stated in 186[*f*]-187[*a*] and 192[*b*].

192[*d*] *Paving* The thousands of thick limestone pavements have withstood the wear and tear of two millennia, and the stonecutters of Palestine then and now were famed for their skill. Thousands were engaged for decades in paving the Temple courts as well as the streets of Jerusalem; unemployment followed when these tasks were completed.

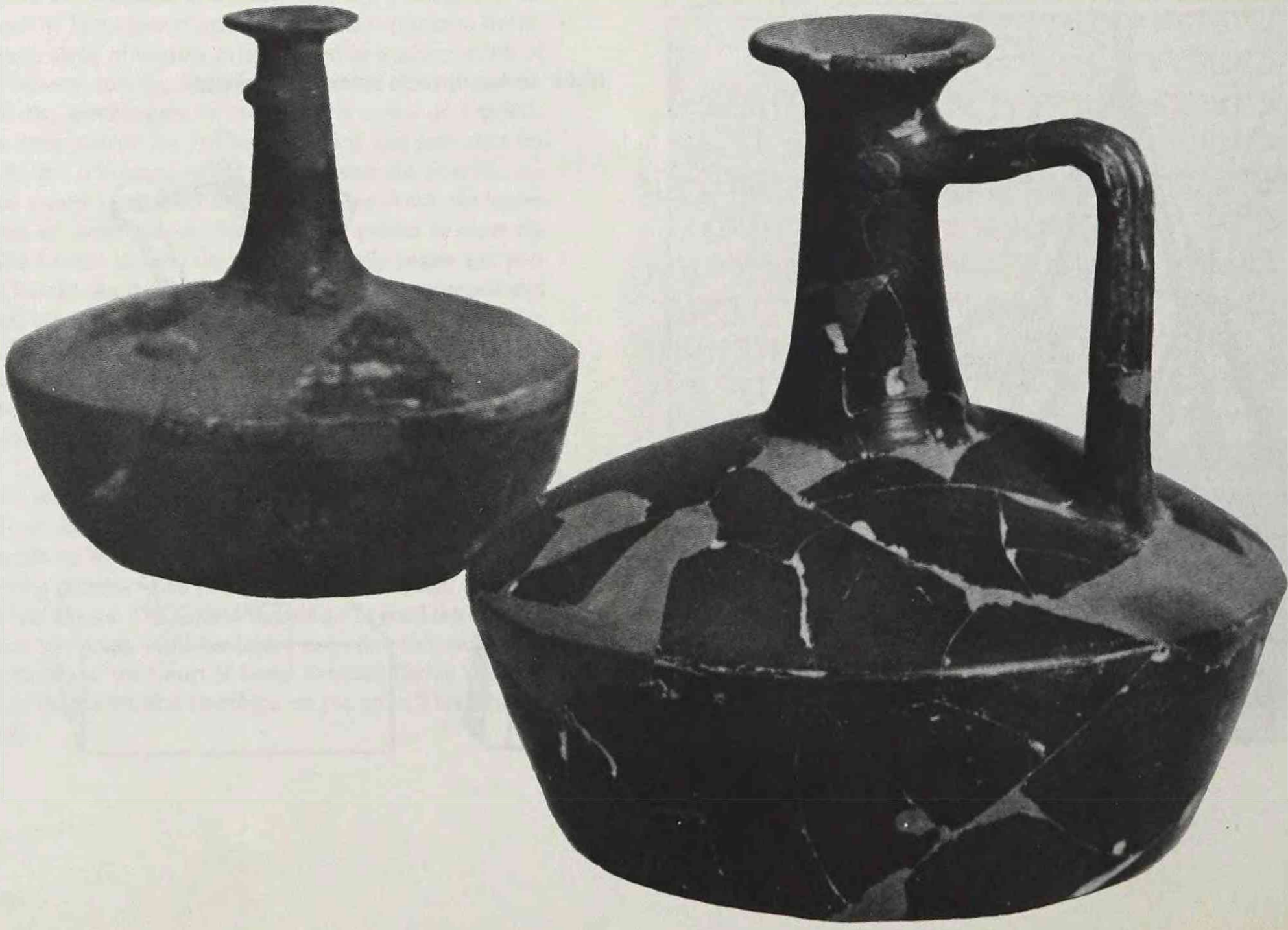
192[*a*]-[*d*] *The outer porticoes* (*stoa* in Greek) surrounding the Temple Mount esplanade were formed by a double row of columns. Each portico, except for the southern Royal Portico, was 15 m. wide. They lent splendor and majesty to the lofty Mount and served also—the Royal Portico in particular—as a place of teaching or assemblies. The double porticoes stood on a podium, which made them appear higher than may be gathered from Josephus' text, and they were covered by a flat roof. *Antiquities* XV, 411-416 gives us much more information about the *Royal Portico;* it was "more deserving of mention than any under the sun". B. Mazar's excavations help to explain their planning, design, and character. The center of the Royal Portico was in the shape of a basilica, consisting of a central nave and two aisles. It was oriented towards the spot now marked by the Robinson Arch on the west, which is the site of an ancient double gate that led to the *stoa basilike* or Royal Portico, referred to as the Ḥanuyot. Another stairway at the east apparently marked its eastern access. *The "Ḥanuyot,"* consisted of 162 monolithic columns arranged in four rows on the site, each 8.2 m. high, and 1.4 m. in diameter, topped by capitals in the Greek Corinthian style, distinguished by its bell-shape and rows of acanthus leaves. The outer courts were used for mass gatherings during the pilgrimage feasts. The courts also had many chambers, storerooms, accessories and other installations connected with the ritual and administration of the Temple. One of the underground huge storerooms under the Royal Portico has been dubbed "Solomon's Stables," apparently because they were used as such by the Crusaders. The Ḥanuyot may be identified with the edifice mentioned in Talmudic sources. According to a Talmudic source the "Sanhedrin had been expelled forty years before the destruction of the Temple (from the Chamber of Hewn Stone on consecrated ground) and took its seat at the Ḥanuyot" (*Sanhedrin* 4, 2; *Aboda Zara* 8, 2). This dated to about AD 30 in the days of Pontius Pilate. The porticoes served several functions concurrently from that date, when certain public activities were transferred there, and reorganized on a more efficient basis than in former years. The reorganization also allowed dealers in ritual objects and money changers to operate in the lower sections of the Ḥanuyot halls. Moreover, some of the Ḥanuyot halls must have been differentiated in the public eye from the truly sacred areas within the inner

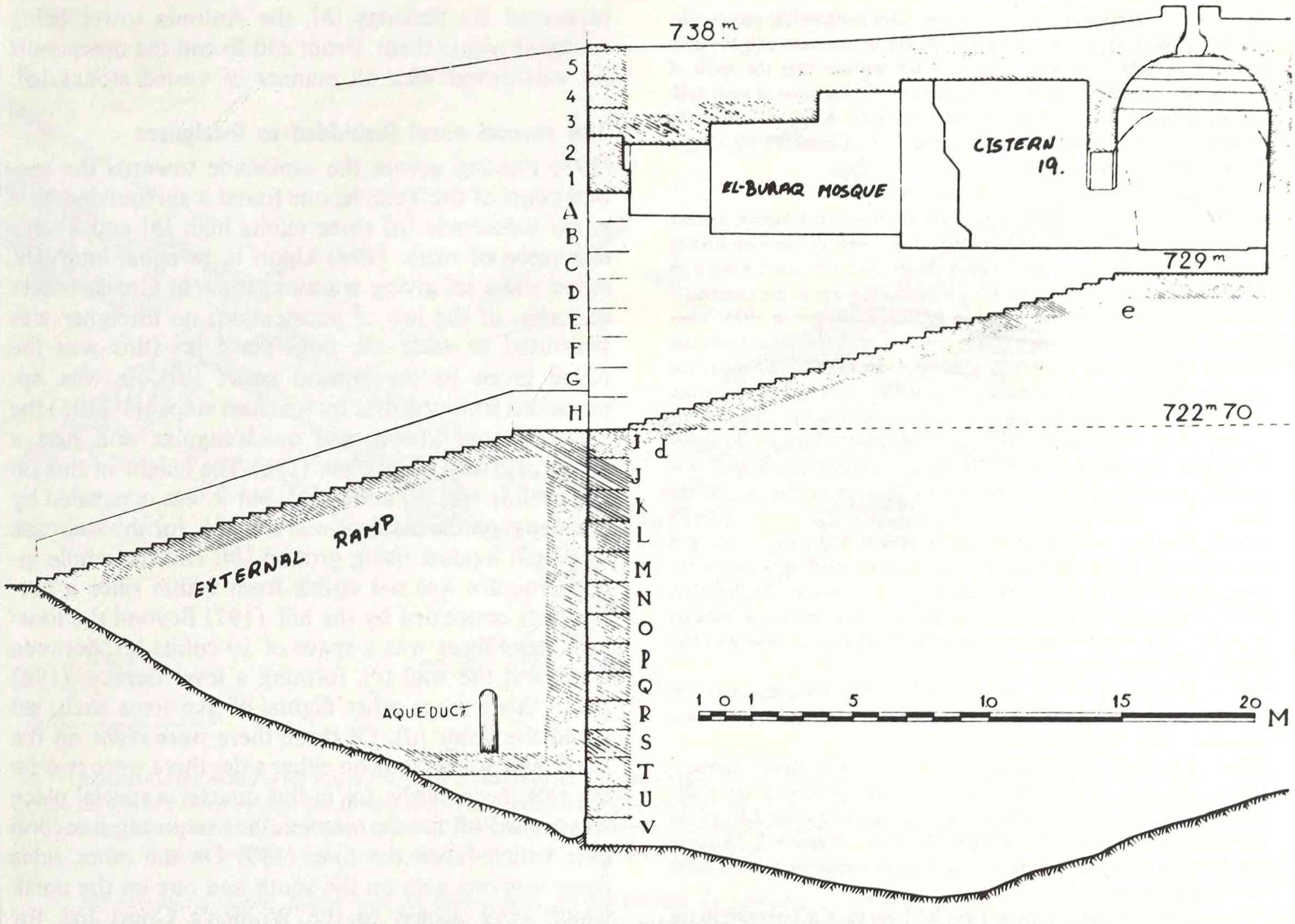
Hook devices used to raise stone blocks



A Herodian house excavated in the Upper City

Lovely pottery found in a wealthy house in the Upper City





Plan drawn by H. L. Vincent showing the probable ramp that led the Tyropoeon Street through the Coponius (Barclay) gate to the upper Courts of the Temple (at the 729 m. mark). Since Islamic times, the ruins of a mosque and a reservoir have blocked this ancient passage. The numerals 1–5 and letters A–V indicate the superimposed layers of the wall

The top side of an arch can be distinguished on the left along the northern (underground) continuation of the Western retaining Wall of the Temple Mount. It is apparently a remnant of the fourth gate of the Western Wall, north of the other three gates

Diagram of the top arch

courts; but it seems that this irritated the more puritannical people who saw the change as an unbecoming intrusion of business into the area regarded as holy, and Jesus also took the attitude that the spirit of worship and reverence had been desecrated by the intrusion of such dealings according to the testimony of John 2, 13-22. A full picture of the topographical and historical round is given in G. Cornfeld's *New Light on the Historical Jesus,* 1982.

193[*a*] *Balustrade* called *Soreg* in Hebrew.

193[*b*] 3 cubits—1.5 m.; they were lower according to *Middoth,* namely approx. 0.80 cm. This barrier separated the courts of the surrounding esplanade from the inner and sacred courts (second court) known as *Azaroth.* The outer courts were known as the "Courts of the Gentiles."

194[*c*] One such slab was found in 1871 and another in 1935. They forbade entrance to Gentiles: Their contents in Greek and Latin are similar; "No foreigner is allowed within the balustrade surrounding the sanctuary and the court enclosed. Whoever is caught will be personally responsible for his ensuing death." Paul was accused of violating the sanctity of the Holy Place by supposedly allowing Trophimus the Ephesian within the barrier (Acts 21, 26 ff). (Cf. illustration on p. 268).

194[*d*] *Second court* The inner courts, *azaroth* in Hebrew, or the *naos.*

194[*e*] *Fourteen steps* Beyond the balustrade and latticed railing a stepped ascent (14 steps) led to a wide platform which surrounded the inner Temple courts in the elevated area; it is known as the *Chēl* (pronounced khēl) or a rampart. The sanctity of this area surpassed that of the rest of Temple Mount, even forbidding entrance to Jews who had not taken a ritual bath that day.

196[*a*] The top of the tall rampart or Chēl reached a height of 19-20 m. above the esplanade and about 11 m. above the platform which it protected within.

196[*b*] The rocky ground which rose to the top of Mount Moriah.

197[*c*] 10 cubic—5 m. between the steps and the wall of the Chēl.

198[*d*] The steps with the terrace above led up from three sides of the structure, except the western side (cf. 38 above). *Middoth* 2, 3b states that 12 steps led up to the gates, but Josephus appears to be a more trustworthy authority.

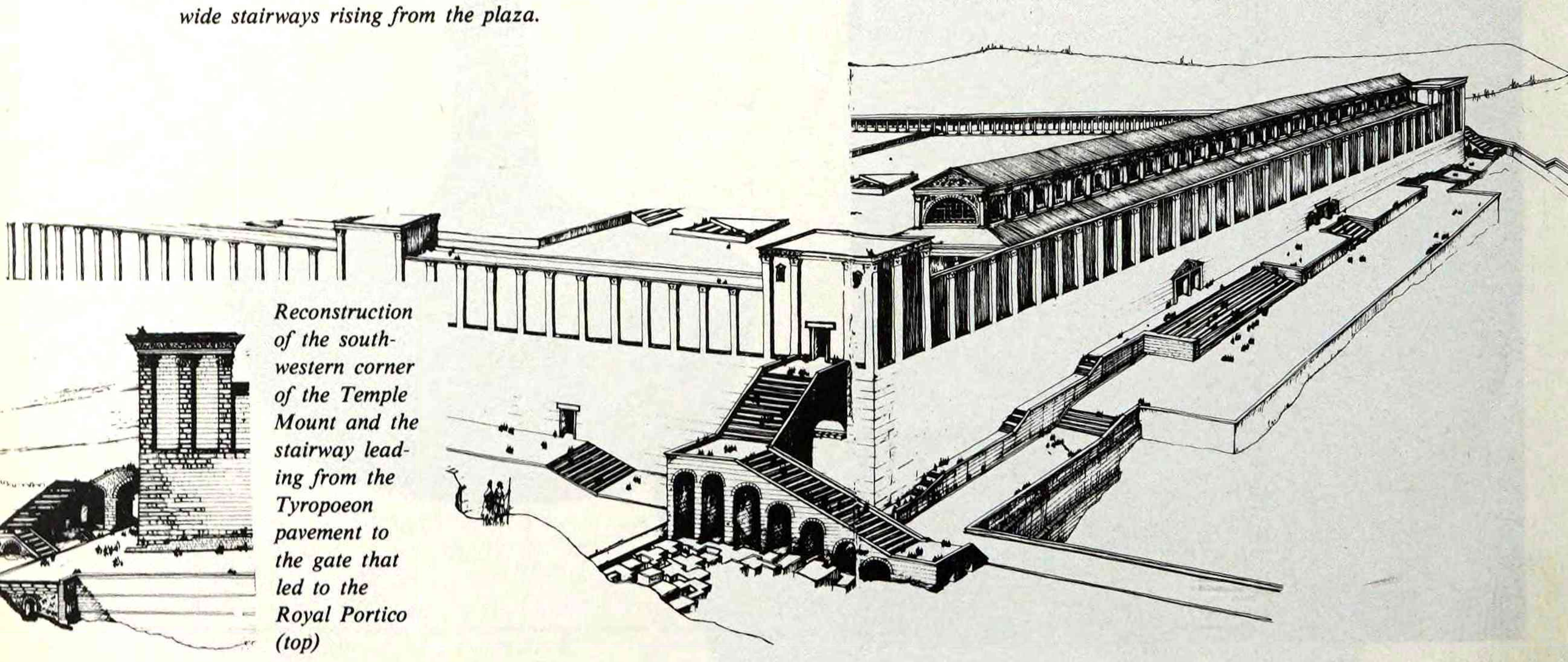
199[*a*] *Women's court* Several gates led from the Chēl rampart to the third holy area, the Court of the Women, access to which was forbidden until sundown to those who had to take a ritual bath that day (*Mishna, Kelim; Antiq.* XV, 417).

measured six furlongs [*b*], the Antonia tower being enclosed within them. From end to end the open court [*c*] was paved with all manner of varied stones [*d*].

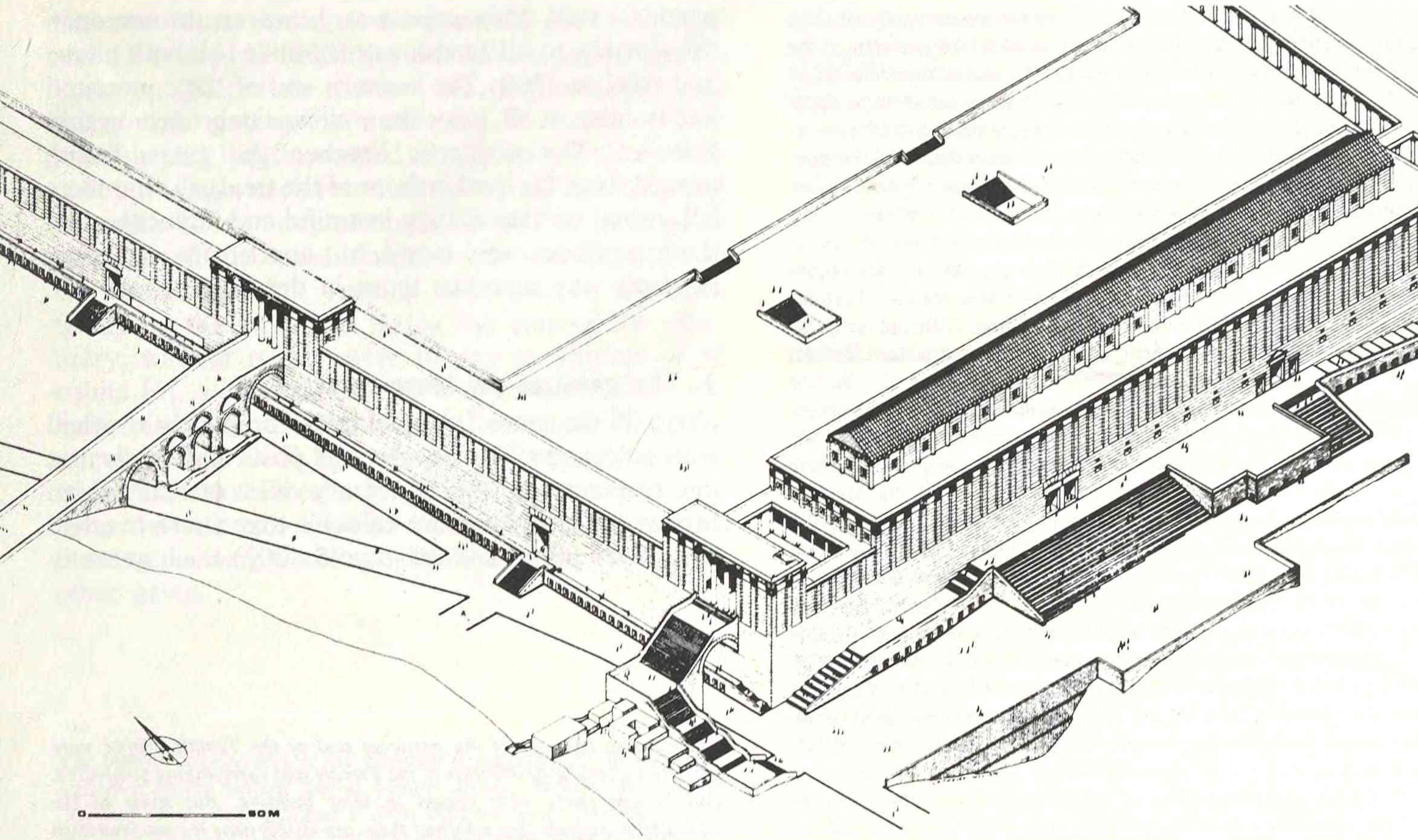
The second court forbidden to foreigners

(193) Passing across the esplanade towards the second court of the Temple, one found it surrounded by a stone balustrade [*a*] three cubits high [*b*] and a very fine piece of work. (194) Upon it, at equal intervals, stood slabs [*c*] giving warning, some in Greek, others in Latin, of the law of purification; no foreigner was permitted to enter the holy place [*c*] (this was the name given to the second court [*d*]). It was approached from the first by fourteen steps [*e*]; (195) the elevated area above was quadrangular and had a protecting wall of its own. (196) The height of this on the outside was 40 cubits [*a*], but it was concealed by the steps; on the inside it was only 25, for the staircase was built against rising ground [*b*], and the whole inner structure was not visible from within since a portion was concealed by the hill. (197) Beyond the fourteen steps there was a space of 10 cubits [*c*], between them and the wall [*c*], forming a level terrace. (198) From this terrace other flights, of five steps each, led up to the gates [*d*]. Of these there were eight on the north and south, four on either side; there were two on the east, necessarily, for in this quarter a special place was walled off for the women, thus requiring a second gate which faced the first. (199) On the other sides there was one gate on the south and one on the north which gave access to the Women's Court [*a*], for women were neither permitted to enter by the other gates, nor to pass by way of their own gate beyond the

Reconstruction model of the western and southern approaches to the Temple Mount. The two-storied Royal Portico or Colonnade of the King ran along the whole width (right) and was reached by the stairway on the southwest leading up to it (the Robinson Arch is all that is left of the stairway). The western portico stands on the left along the Western Wall and was reached by a lower gate. The Tyropoeon Street skirts the Western Wall. The southern gates, below the Royal Portico, i.e., the Double and Triple Hulda gates, were reached by wide stairways rising from the plaza.



Reconstruction of the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount and the stairway leading from the Tyropoeon pavement to the gate that led to the Royal Portico (top)



Reconstruction model of the Royal Portico or Ḥanuyot of the Temple Mount, a three-story structure, as described. People gained access to the Royal Portico through the Double and Triple Hulda gates (rightside of the picture) and by two stairways near the southwest and southeast corners. The only vestige of the left stairway is the Robinson Arch described above. The west side of the Temple Mount, famous for its Western (wailing) Wall, was entered through the gates described above

The so-called Solomon Stables were the vaulted halls situated beneath the southeastern end of the Royal Portico and were reached through the Triple Hulda gate. They were built by Herod about a millennium after Solomon's time, and were used as storehouses and pens of the Temple. The upper arches were rebuilt in Crusader times, when the halls were used as stables

199[*b*] The Women's Court and communal functions conducted there according to Talmudic traditions: In contrast to the outer courts of the Temple Mount and the Chēl which surrounded the inner sanctuary on all four sides, the Court of Women extended only along the eastern side of the sanctuary and served as a sort of secondary or outer court for the inner court (see diagram). It was smaller than the inner court. All the communal functions relating to divine worship in the Second Temple period were conducted there. It was here that, upon the completion of the sacrificial rites on the Day of Atonement, the high priest read the Torah before the people (*Yoma* 69b); here also, once in seven years on the Feast of Tabernacles, either the high priest or the king read the Torah to the assembled multitude gathering all around (*Sotah* 41b); and here, too, the public gathered for the procession of the Pouring of water (*Simchat Beth-Hashoeva*) during the Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkah* 5, 1-4). The Court of Women also housed the *"chambers"* frequented by the people (see diagram): the "house of oils," the "chamber of wood" for sacrifices; the "Nazirites' and lepers" chambers for the offering of their respective sacrifices. Adjacent to the lepers' chamber was one of the *Mikvehs* (purification baths) in which it was customary to bathe before entering the inner court (*Middoth* 2, 5; *Negaim* 8, 9). The name "Court of Women" does not derive from the fact that it accommodated only women (native or Jewesses from abroad), for all visitors to the Temple passed through it and often spent some time there; it stems from the fact that for the most part women did not advance beyond it, although during the whole-offering of the sacrifices they were not forbidden access to the inner courts (*Arakhin* 2, 1). In sum, it formed the main access to the inner holy courts (S. Safrai. *The Jewish People in the First Century,* 1976, pp. 866-867).

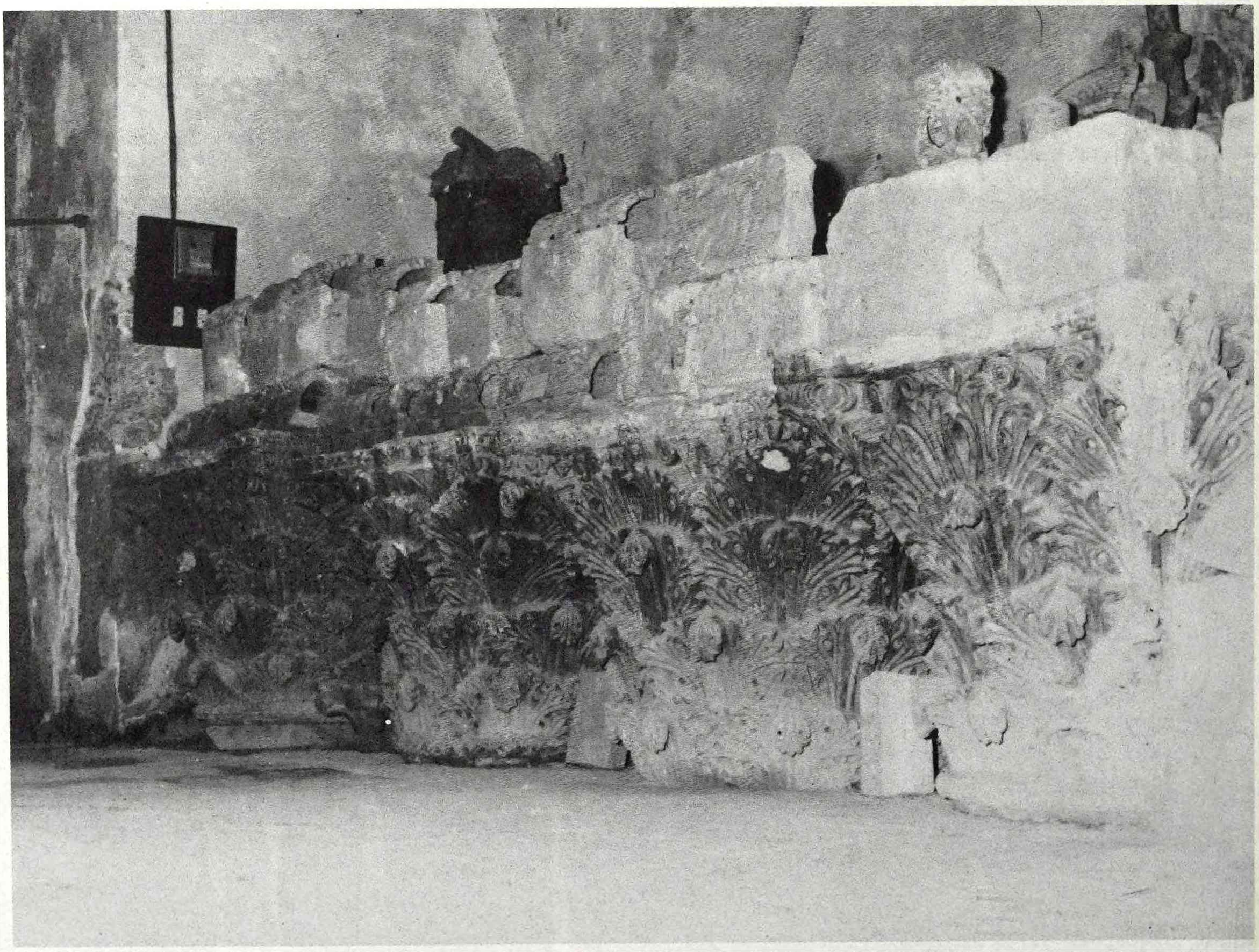
200[*c*] Cf. 38 The western end of the compound was situated in the rear of the sanctuary's dark chamber, the Holy of Holies, and could not be defiled by a gate in its proximity.

partition wall. This court was, however, thrown open for worship to all Jewish women alike [*b*], both native and foreign. (200) The western end of the compound had no gate at all, since the wall was unbroken on that side [*c*]. The porticoes between the gates, facing inward from the wall in front of the treasury chambers [*d*], rested on exceedingly beautiful and high columns; these porticoes were single, but apart from size, were in every way equal to those in the lower court.

3. The gates of the inner courts

(201) Of the gates [*a*], nine were completely overlaid with gold and silver, as were the posts and lintels, but the one outside the sanctuary was of Corinthian bronze [*a*], and far more valuable than those overlaid with silver plates and set in gold. (202) Each gateway

The massive columns of the porticoes and of the Temple proper were scattered after the destruction of the Temple and surrounding structures, and broken parts were reused in later building. But some of the Corinthian capitals that adorned them are visible near the southwestern entrance to the Temple Mount esplanade. *See p. 357*



had two doors, and each door was 30 cubits [*a*] high and 15 broad [*a*]. (203) Beyond and on the inner side, however, the portals widened out, and on either side there were gaterooms measuring 30 cubits [*b*] in breadth and length, shaped like turrets, and over 40 cubits [*c*] high, each room supported by two columns 12 cubits [*d*] in circumference. (204) The other gates were all of the same size, but the one beyond the Corinthian gate [*a*], opening out from the Women's Court on the east, and facing the gate of the sanctuary, was far more ample, having an altitude of 50 cubits [*b*], with doors of 40 [*c*]; its decoration was more magnificent, the gold and silver plates being extremely thick. (205) This plating was the gift of Alexander, father of Tiberius [*d*]. (206) Fifteen steps led up from the women's enclosure to the greater gate [*a*], these steps being shallower than the five at each of the other gates.

200[*d*] The "treasury chambers" contained thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles for the collection of alms and offerings; they stood in the Court of Women where everybody, men and women, gathered before the daily ritual began.

201[*a*] Cf. 198 (ten gates). *The Nicanor gate* donated by the Alexandrian Jew of that name was made of the famous Corinthian bronze, which is why it was dubbed as the Corinthian gate. It was the only gate which led from the western end of the Court of Women to the inner Court of Israel called simply the "ha'azara." It was reached by fifteen steps "rounded like the half of a round threshing floor."

202[*a*] 30×15 cubits—approx. 15×7.5 m.

203[*b*] 30×40 cubits—15×20 m.

203[*c*] 40 cubits—20 m.

203[*d*] 12 cubits—approx. 6 m.

204[*a*] This was the "Beautiful Gate," the main entrance, which faced the rising sun.

204[*b*] 50 cubits—25 m.

204[*c*] 40 cubits—20 m.

205[*d*] Alexander the "alabarch" famed for his piety and generosity. His son, Tiberius Alexander, a renegade Jew, was the governor of Alexandria and later Titus' chief of staff (*War* II, 220; V, 45) who helped to destroy Jerusalem.

206[*a*] Cf. 198. The Levites stood on the steps leading off from the Women's Court to the greater, or Nicanor gate, and sang the fifteen Songs of Ascents from Psalms (*Sukkah* 4, 1; *Middoth* 2, 5). Lepers and other ritually unclean persons were placed near the entrance in order to be cleansed, just as the suspected adulteress was placed before the high priest at this gate. The Nicanor gate led to the narrow Court of the

The interior architecture of the Ḥanuyot is suggested by the Byzantine structure on the eastern side of Temple Mount, namely, the immured "Golden Gate" hall, situated a short distance away, northeast of the Ḥanuyot. Though it was erected in Byzantine times, some columns were apparently taken from the ruins of the Ḥanuyot after the destruction of AD 70

Corinthian-style capitals of Herodian columns assembled as the southwestern entrance of the Temple Mount. *See p. 356*

Israelites (see diagram), the last hall before the Court of the priests where the sacrificial rite was conducted daily on the great altar.

207[*b*] *The sanctuary itself* The holy Temple, in Hebrew *hekhal.*

207[*c*] The sanctuary was a rectangular structure, approx. 50 m. long, 35 m. wide and 50 m. high according to *Middoth* 3, 7. The main structure behind the façade (also called the porch) was narrower by 20 m. It seems that King Agrippa II (who erected the Third Wall) intended to raise the height of the façade but this was prevented by the outbreak of war (V, 36 ff.; *Antiq.* XV, 391).

207[*d*] 20 cubits —10 m.

208[*a*] Approx. 35 × 12.5 m.

208[*b*] *No doors* This open structure was shaped like an Oriental-Hellenistic *propylaeon* (vestibule). We also know that in front of the wide façade was an open structure called *ūlām* in Hebrew (porch: see diagram) consisting of four columns, two on either side of the entrance to the sanctuary. The shape of this façade can be seen on the coins of Bar Kochba AD 132-135) and in the 3rd century AD wall painting of the synagogue of Dura Europos on the Euphrates.

208[*c*] *The first hall* facing the porch, called *ūlām.* The second (sanctuary) was a rectangular structure (see diagram).

209[*a*] *"Two separate halls"* The sanctuary was divided into a forward section called the *kōdesh* (the holy) and an inner section called adytum, in Hebrew *debīr* (holy of holies), the innermost (the holy of holies marked M in the diagram).

209[*b*] Dimensions of the *ūlām*: 90 cubits—approx. 45 m. high; 50 cub.—25 m. long and 10 m. wide. The length here refers to: from north to south, and the width from east to west.

210[*a*] This paragraph which we suggest numbering 210 seems a more logical sequel to 209; it would be out of place if it appeared as para. 211—as in other texts (describing doors). It appears that the text has been worked over or is a *gloss* (brief interpretation between the lines) placing para. 211 before 210, and has confused translators ever since.

210[*b*] The dimensions of the golden doors: approx. 27 × 8 m.

211[*c*] *As I said* Meaning the porch leading to the *ūlām.* Cf. 208.

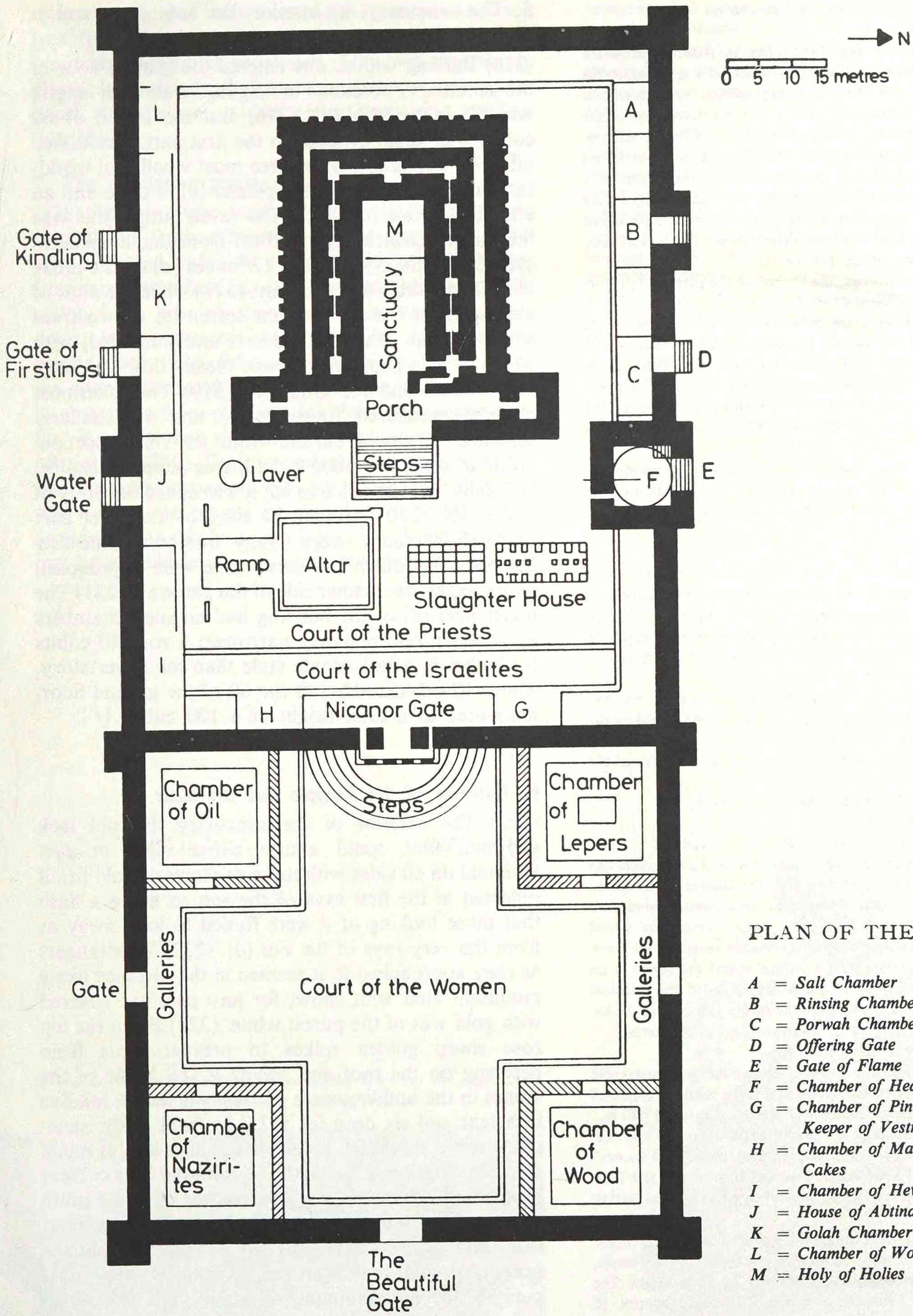
211[*d*] *Above it* Above the doors to the sanctuary, flanking the golden vines at the entrance.

213[*e*] Origin of the purple: it was made from the murex or purple sea snail and extracted by craftsmen of northern Palestine and Tyre on the Phoenician coast. It was called Tyrian purple.

Reconstruction model of the Temple's façade in Avi-Yonah's model

4. The Temple buildings and the propylaeum façade

(207) The sanctuary itself, the holy Temple [*b*], stood in the center and was reached by a flight of twelve steps. Its façade [*c*] was of the same height and breadth, each being a 100 cubits; but the building in the rear was narrower by 40 cubits [*c*], for it was flanked by shoulders, as it were, extending 20 cubits [*d*] on either side. (208) The first gate was 70 cubits high and 25 broad [*a*]; it had no doors [*b*], displaying unhampered the vast expanse of heaven; the entire face was covered with gold, and through it the arch of the first hall [*c*] was fully visible to an onlooker without in all its grandeur, and the surroundings of the inner gate, all gleaming with gold, struck the beholder's eye. (209) But, whereas the sanctuary within consisted of two separate halls [*a*], the first alone was visible from top to bottom, towering to a height of 90 cubits [*b*] from the floor, its length being 50 and its breadth 20 [*b*]. (210) As the sanctuary was two stories high, it appeared lower from within than from without [*a*] and its golden doors [*b*] were 55 cubits high and 16 broad [*b*]. (211) The gate opening into the building was, as I said, [*c*] completely overlaid with gold, as was the whole wall surrounding it. Above it [*d*], moreover, were the golden grapvines [*d*] from which hung grape clusters as tall as a man. (212) In front of these hung a veil of equal length of Babylonian tapestry embroidered with blue, scarlet and purple and fine linen, wrought with marvelous craftsmanship. This mixture of materials was not chosen without mystic significance; it typified the universe; (213) The scarlet denoted fire, the fine linen the earth, blue the air, and the purple the sea; the resemblance, in two cases, was one of color, and in that of the fine linen and purple, their origin [*e*], as the first comes from the earth and the second from the sea [*e*]. (214) Worked into this tapestry was the panorama of the heavens, except for the signs of the Zodiac.



PLAN OF THE TEMPLE

A = *Salt Chamber*
B = *Rinsing Chamber*
C = *Porwah Chamber*
D = *Offering Gate*
E = *Gate of Flame*
F = *Chamber of Hearth*
G = *Chamber of Pinehas, the Keeper of Vestments*
H = *Chamber of Makers of Baked Cakes*
I = *Chamber of Hewn Stone*
J = *House of Abtinas*
K = *Golah Chamber*
L = *Chamber of Wood*
M = *Holy of Holies*

The Temple itself *was oriented to the east. Twelve steps arranged in groups of three and large landings, led from the court to the porch (approx. 3.5×6 m.) and had additional rooms on the flanks, bringing the total breadth to approx. 50 m., the same as the height of the building. The back wall of the porch was goldplated and in it hung the golden lamp. The main entrance was the center of the façade, and a golden bunch of grapes was suspended over it. The other inner halls conform to Josephus' description: A double veil separated the Hall, or central room, from the dark Holy of Holies, to which only the high priest had access on the Day of Atonement. There was no sacred furniture there*

215[*a*] 60×60×20 cubits—approx. 30×30×10 m.

216[*b*] 40 cubits—20 m.

216[*c*] In the center of the sanctuary (*ulām* in Hebrew) stood the golden incense altar; to the north the golden-plated table upon which the shewbread was placed; to the south the golden seven-branched candelabrum *(menorah). Midoth* 4 gives a detailed description of the shape of the vessels, which are familiar from the relief on the Arch of Titus in Rome (see illustrations VII, 148 ff). The seven-branched candelabrum is also depicted in a graffito incised in the plaster of a priestly house excavated in the Jewish Quarter (the ancient Upper City destroyed in AD 70). It is regarded as the earliest detailed depiction of the Temple menorah at a time when the original object was located only several hundred feet away, in the Temple.

217[*d*] The loaves of shewbread, the "bread of the presence"; as ordained in *Lev.* 24, 5-9; I Sam. 21, 5-7.

218[*e*] While four ingredients are prescribed for the incense of the Mosaic period (*Exod.* 30, 44), namely, frankincense, stacte, onycha, and galbanum, burnt on the inner stone altar, nine more were added in the latter years of the Second Temple; myrrh, cassia, spikenard, saffron, mace, costus, cinnamon, salt, as well as a herb which caused the smoke to ascend vertically. The inner incense altar of the Herodian Temple was made of gold.

218[*f*] *Of God and for God* The four ingredients were interpreted by Philo as the four elements and suggest a cosmic interpretation of the incense. Josephus gives a similar interpretation to the tabernacle and priestly vestments in para. 232[*b*].

219[*a*] 20 cubits—approx. 10 m.

219[*b*] *Holy of Holies* In Hebrew *debīr,* the hindmost chamber, at the western end of the sanctuary. It was a dark, windowless 33 ft. cube with a flat roof. It was empty, for, according to tradition, the Ark had disappeared after the end of the Judaean monarchy. It was entered only once a year by the high priest on the Day of Atonement. Its curtain was opened from below and not on the side.

220[*c*] These thirty-eight intercommunicating chambers reached through passages (called *Yas'iah*, pronounced Yātz'iā) were used by the priestly attendants for the varied services connected with the ritual observances, as well as for the storage of vessels and treasures of the Temple.

221[*d*] *The upper part* The gate or Porch, cf. 210[*c*].

221[*e*] 40 cubits—approx. 20 m.

221[*f*] 40 + 60 = 100 cubits—approx. 20 + 30 m. = 50 m.

222[*a*] *Gold* The breathtaking exterior appearance of the Temple has been perpetuated by the architects who built the Islamic *Dome of the Rock.* Originally this dome was sheathed in lead sheets coated with gilded copper. In recent years these have been replaced by gilded aluminum which shines out, magically upholding the image of *Jerusalem the Golden.* Appropriately enough, the original sheets are stored in an underground gallery beneath the Aqsa Mosque, called the "ancient Aqsa," an underground passageway from the *Hulda* gate, one of the ancient gates of the Temple Mount, of great archaeological interest.

224[*b*] *Middoth* 4, 6 speaks of scare-crows.

224[*c*] 45×6×6 cubits—22.5×3×3 m. "The ashlars are remarkable for their length; some of them, including several at the southern corner of Temple Mount, and even in the Western Wall itself, measure 11.20 m." (B. Mazar, *ibid.,* p. 121). Some of the blocks weigh up to 120 tons. Cf. the disciples' exclamation "Master, behold, what manner of stones" (Mark 13, 1). Talmudic tradition states: "He who has not seen the Temple of Israel has never in his life seen a beautiful structure" (*Baba Bathra* 4,a).

225[*a*] Josephus' dimensions of the open-air altar of holocausts (whole burnt offerings) which stood some 12 m. from the façade of the Temple, are: Approx. 25×25 m. in length and width and 7.5 m. in height. The dimensions in *Middoth* 3, 1 mention a square of 32 cubits (approx. 16 m.) and a height of 3.8 m.

225[*b*] The *ramp (kebesh)* Both altar and ramp were constructed of untrimmed stones "because iron is made to shorten man's life, whereas the altar was erected in order to lengthen man's years" (*Middoth* 3, 4).

226[*c*] *Separated the laity outside* The low parapet 0.50 m. high separated the consecrated Court of the priests from the Court of the Israelites which measured about 5.5 m. in width (see diagram). The

5. The sanctuary: its interior, the holy place and Holy of Holies

(215) Passing within, one entered the ground floor of the sanctuary, 60 cubits in height, the same in length, and 20 in breadth [*a*]. (216) But the length of 60 cubits was again divided. In the first part, partitioned off at 40 cubits [*b*], were three most wonderful world-famous works of art, a lampstand [*c*], a table and an altar of incense [*c*]. (217) The seven lamps (this was the number which branched off from the lampstand) symbolized the planets; the 12 loaves [*d*] on the table, the Zodiac circle and the year; (218) while the altar of incense, near the 13 fragrant spices [*e*] drawn from sea and from land, both desert and inhabited, with which it was kept replenished, meant that all things are of God and for God [*f*]. (219) The innermost chamber measured 20 cubits [*a*], and was similarly screened off by a curtain from the outer portion. Nothing whatever stood in it; it was unapproachable, inviolable, and invisible to all; it was called the Holy of Holies [*b*]. (220) Around the sides of the lower part of the sanctuary were many intercommunicating chambers [*c*] on three floors; these were approached by passages from either side of the gateway. (221) The upper part [*d*] of the building had no such chambers as it was proportionately narrower; it rose 40 cubits [*e*] higher in a less ornate style than the lower story. These 40 cubits, added to the 60 of the ground floor, amounted to a total height of a 100 cubits [*f*].

6. Exterior of the Temple and the altar

(222) The exterior of the sanctuary did not lack anything that could amaze either mind or eye. Overlaid on all sides with massive plates of gold [*a*], it reflected in the first rays of the sun so fierce a flash that those looking at it were forced to look away as from the very rays of the sun [*a*]. (223) To strangers as they approached it, it seemed in the distance like a mountain clad with snow; for any part not covered with gold was of the purest white. (224) From the top rose sharp golden spikes to prevent birds from perching on the roof and soiling it [*b*]. Some of the stones in the building were 45 cubits in length [*c*], five in height and six deep [*c*]. (225) In front of the sanctuary stood the altar, 15 cubits [*a*] high and as much as 50 in length and in width [*a*], with the four corners protruding like horns, and approached from the south by a gently slanting ramp [*b*]. It was built without iron, and no iron ever touched it. (226) Round the sanctuary and the altar ran a graceful low stone parapet [*c*] approximately a cubit high [*c*] which separated the laity outside from the priests.

Prohibited areas

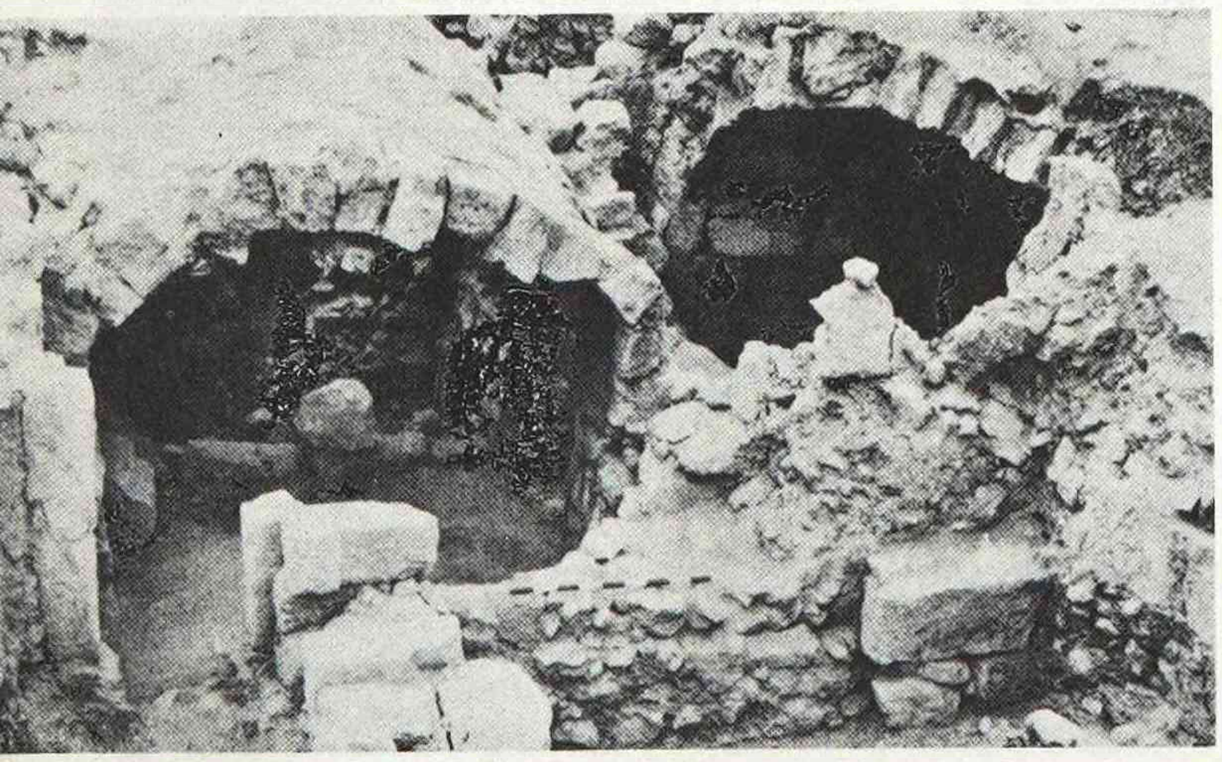
(227) Sufferers from gonorrhoea or leprosy were excluded from the city altogether; the Temple was closed

to women during their menstruation, and even when free from impurity they could not go beyond the boundary described above [*a*]. Men not thoroughly clean were debarred from admission to the inner court, as were even priests when undergoing purification [*b*].

7. The officiating priests

(228) All those who were of priestly lineage but were disqualified from officiating due to physical defect were admitted within the parapet along with those free from any imperfection, and received the portions to which birth entitled them, but they wore ordinary dress; holy vestments were worn by the officiating priests alone. (229) Priests without blemish went up to the altar in the sanctuary robed in fine linen, rigorously abstaining from strong drink through reverence for the ritual, lest they should transgress in any way while officiating. (230) The high priest accompanied them, not on every occasion, but on the seventh day and new moons, and on any national festival or annual assembly of the whole nation [*c*]. (231) When ministering, he wore breeches [*a*] which covered his thighs up

Presumed remains on Mount Zion of the house of the high priest Caiaphas, before whom Jews were brought for trial



Levites stood on a raised platform connected to this partition while they sang Psalms (*Middoth* 2, 6). "The consecrated court of the priests, measuring 104 × 7.5 m., surrounded the Temple building... The place of slaughtering, a structure provided with a marble table, posts, and hooks to hold the slain animals, stood north of the altar" (B. Mazar, *ibid.*, p. 116).

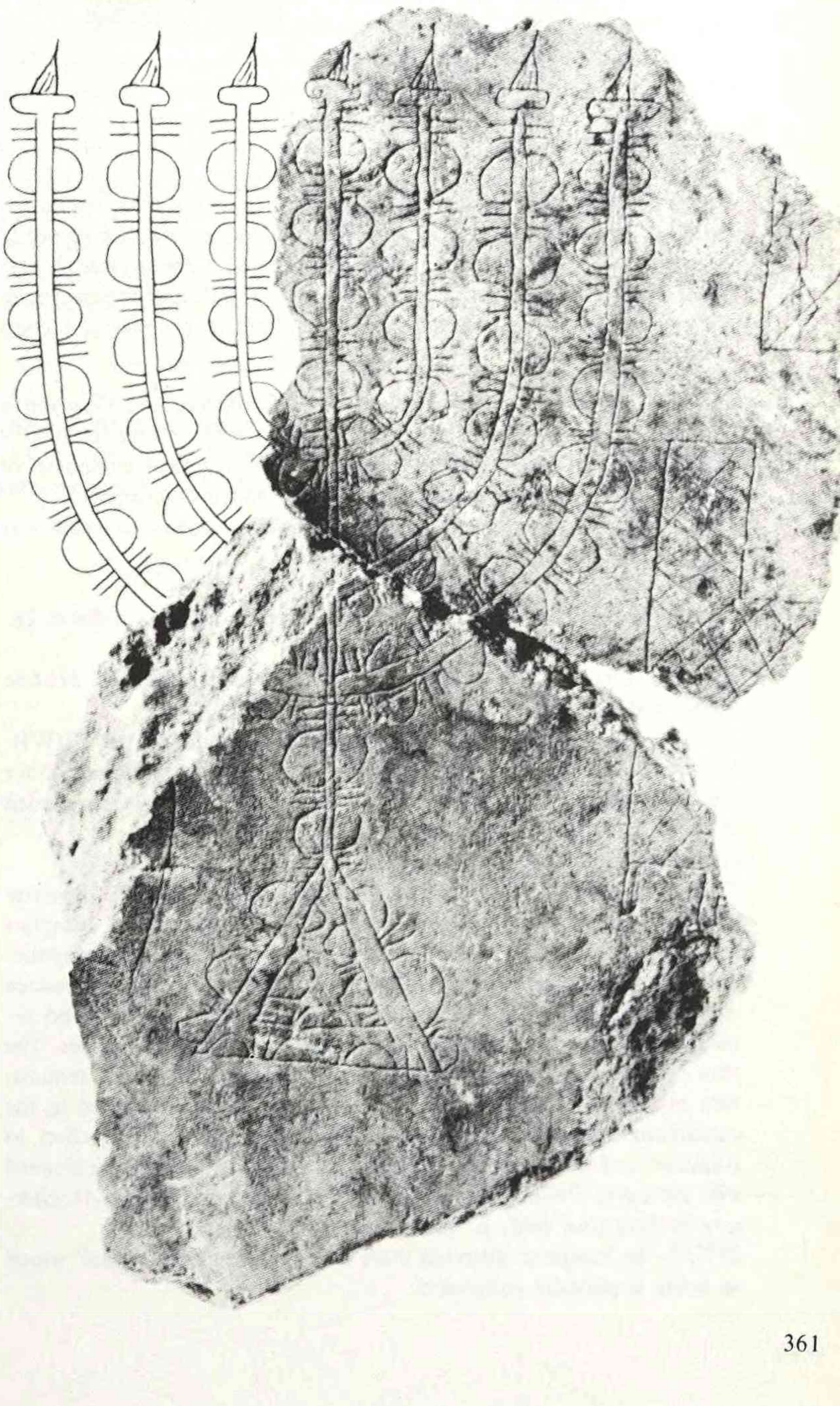
227[*a*] Cf. 199.

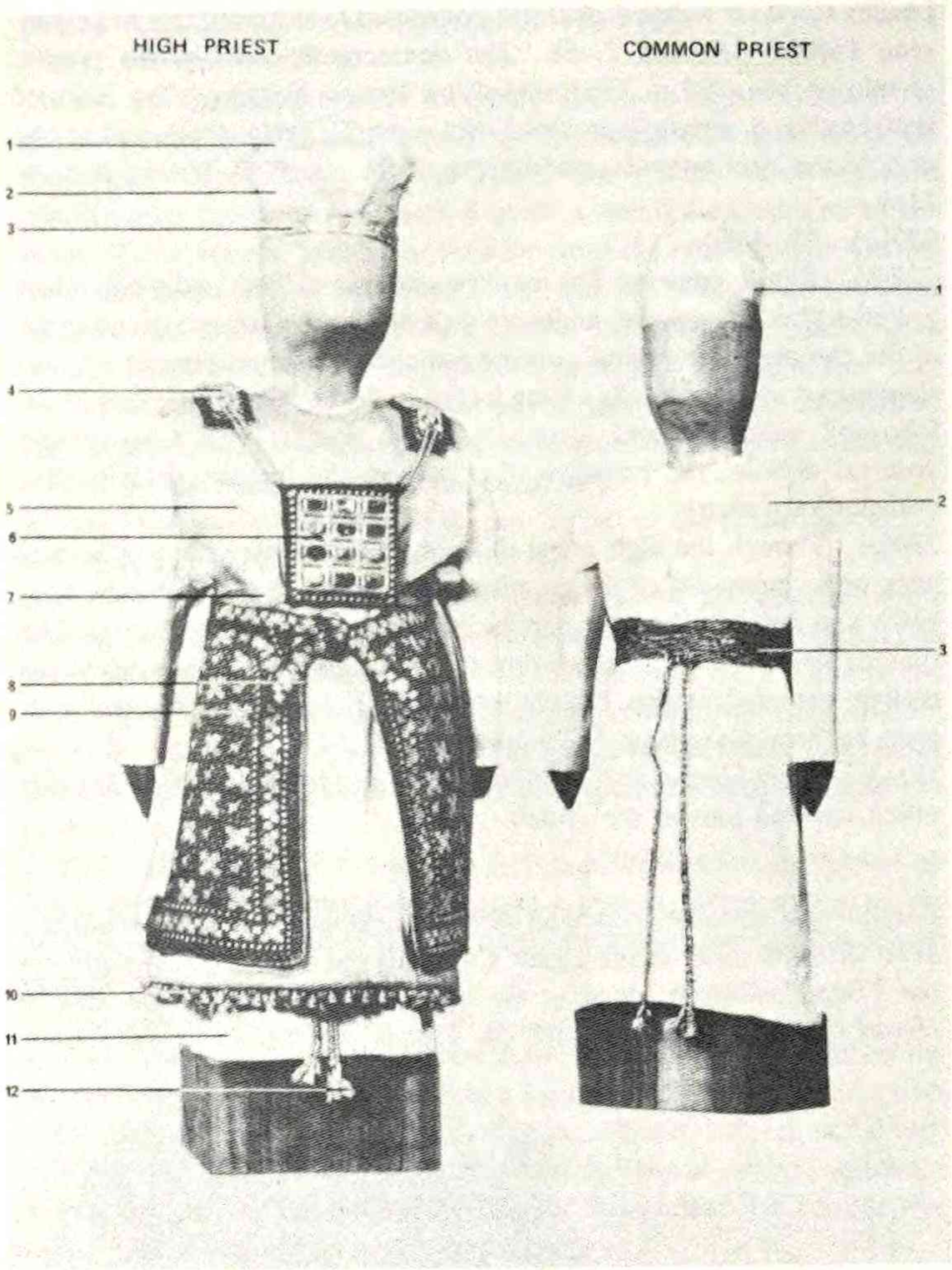
227[*b*] *Ritual impurity* The main grounds were: Man and woman had to bathe after intercourse, and were thus purified by sunset; the presence of the carcass of an animal causing pollution till sunset (except animals slaughtered for food); a flux from a man and a discharge from a woman following childbirth and lasting a week; contact with leprosy and venereal disease; the presence of a corpse; the impurity of Gentiles; evidence of idolatry.

230[*c*] Though the high priest did not minister every day, as he was busy with communal affairs, he often participated in the service on Sabbaths and festivals; he took part in the ritual on special occasions. The sources stress his activities during the Feast of Tabernacles when the crowds gathered in the Temple where the ritual was performed with great festivity and pomp (cf. *War* I, 73, II, 515).

231[*a*] *Linen breeches—mikhnesei-bād* in Hebrew (Exod. 28, 42) which covered him to the crotch.

Graffito of a menorah incised on plaster on the wall of a house situated a short distance away in the Upper City. It is the oldest representation of the Temple menorah found in the ruins of a house from the time of Herod (37-4 BC) and predates the Temple destruction in AD 70





Model of the high priest and common priest wearing their vestments. Left: 1. blue band; 2. miter; 3. gold plate; 4. pnyx stones with names of the tribes (six on each stone); 5. robe of the ephod; 6. breastplate; 7. blue band; 8. band of the ephod; 9. ephod; 10. bells of gold and pomegranates of dyed wool and linen; 11. coat; 12. bells. Right: 1. headdress; 2. coat; 3. girdle

231[*b*]-232[*b*] *The high priest's vestments* A full description is given in Exodus 28. In addition to the white garment worn by all his fellow-priests, the high priest wore the splendid gold vestment composed of eight pieces of clothing in keeping with the above description.

233[*c*] *Ephod*—one of his garments, possibly a cape—to which was attached the breastplate (*hoshen hamishpat* in Heb.).

233[*d*] *Cuirass* or breastplate.

233[*e*] *Sardonyxes*—a gem of uncertain nature intended in *Exod.* 28.

234[*a*] *Other side*—namely in front.

235[*b*] *Tiara*—mitre, a tall cap, deeply cleft at the top. *(Cf. Mishna Yoma,* end of Chap. 7).

235[*c*] *The tetragrammaton,* or sacred name transliterated YHWH-Yahawe. Josephus speaks of four "vowels," probably meaning the above four letters, which transliterated into vowels in Greek, but were regarded as consonants in Hebrew.

236[*d*] On the Day of Atonement.

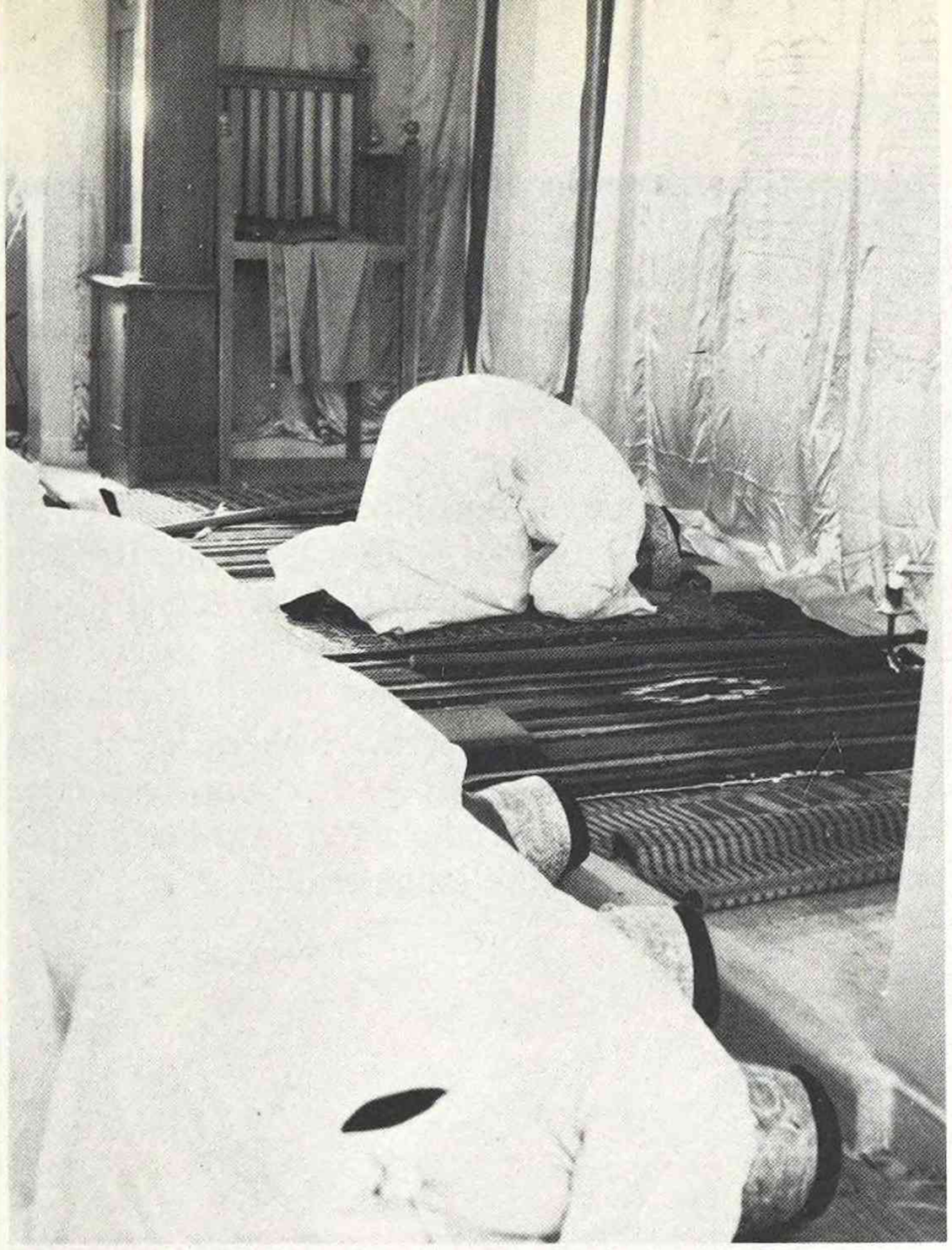
237[*e*] *Description of the Temple and archaeological data:* G. Foerster concludes: "Despite the detailed character of the accounts of Josephus and the *Mishna* (see diagram) not a few difficulties attend the reconstruction of the temple and its ornamentation, owing to the complete absence of archaeological data; but it may be supposed that its plan and ornamentation were akin to those of various other Oriental temples. The plan of the entire ensemble of the Temple Mount is especially reminiscent of the *caesareum* of the Roman world, which originated in the caesareum erected in Alexandria"; such was Herod's subjection to Augustus and of the impact of Hellenistic Roman styles, which blended with the native Oriental styles of Judaea. (G. Foerster, *Art and Architecture in Palestine, ibid.,* p. 980.

237[*f*] In Josephus' intended book on "Customs and Causes" which he never apparently completed.

to the loins, a linen undergarment, and over that a blue robe [*b*] reaching to his feet, full and tasseled; to the tassels were attached alternately golden bells and pomegranates, the bells signifying thunder and the pomegranates lightning. (232) The embroidered sash that bound [*b*] the robe to the breast was adorned by five bands in different colors—gold, purple, scarlet, linen and blue, with which, as we said [*b*], the curtains of the sanctuary were also interwoven. (233) The same combination of materials appeared in the high priest's *ephod* [*c*], gold being preponderant. In form like an ordinary cuirass [*d*], it was secured by two golden brooches set with very large and very lovely sardonyxes [*e*] engraved with the names of those after whom the twelve tribes of the nation are called. (234) Attached to the other side [*a*] were twelve more stones in four groups of three each—sardius, topaz, and emerald; carbuncle, jasper, and sapphire; agate, amethyst, and jacinth; onyx, beryl, and chrysolite; on each of these again was engraved the name of one of the heads of the tribes. (235) On his head the high priest wore a tiara [*b*] of fine linen wreathed with blue and encircled by another crown of gold on which were embossed the sacred letters, to wit, four vowels [*c*]. (236) These robes were not always worn by the high priest; he put on less ornate garments except when he entered the innermost shrine, which he did once a year [*d*]—alone—on the day observed by all as a fast to God [*d*]. (237) Of the city and the sanctuary [*e*] with its customs and laws, we shall speak more minutely hereafter [*f*]; for on these subjects much yet remains to be told.

8. The Tower of Antonia and the Roman garrison

(238) The tower of Antonia [*a*] was situated at the junction of two porticoes of the first Temple court [*a*], the western and the northern, and was built on a rock 50 cubits high [*b*] and precipitous on all sides. It was the work of King Herod [*c*] and revealed in the highest degree the grandeur of his genius. (239) In the first place, from its base upwards, the rock was covered with smooth flagstones, both for ornament and in order that anyone who tried to climb up or down would slip off. (240) Next, before the actual tower, there was a wall three cubits [*d*] high; and behind this the whole elevation of Antonia rose majestically to a height of 40 cubits [*e*]. (241) The interior resembled a palace in spaciousness and appointments; for it was divided into halls of every description and for every purpose, including porticoes, baths, and broad courtyards for the accommodation of troops; so that in having all coveniences it seemed like a town, and in its splendor a palace [*f*]. (242) In appearance it was a tower flanked by other towers at each of its four corners; of these, three were 50 cubits high [*a*], while that of the southeast corner rose to 70 cubits [*b*], and so commanded a view of the whole area of the Temple. (243) At the point where it joined the Temple porticoes, there were stairs [*c*] leading down to both of



The appearance and ritual motions of ancient Jewish priests may find some analogy in the garb and genuflections performed by the surviving Samaritan sectaries still living in Nablus (Shechem) and Holon near Tel Aviv, as shown in their synagogue scene

238[*a*] The Antonia is also described in note V. 146[*b*].

238[*b*] 50 cubits, approx. 25 m.

238[*c*] It is generally agreed that the citadel *"Baris"* built on the site in Persian days (5th-4th centuries BC) was expanded in King Hyrcanus' time (*War* I, 75). It was entirely rebuilt by Herod and named after Mark Antony. The author's expression of praise for the former's "genius" echoes that which he accorded him for the building of Caesarea (*War* I, 401). The Antonia is also the "Castle" of Acts 21, 34 or "barracks" (RSV).

240[*d*] 3 cubits, approx. 1.5 m.

240[*e*] 40 cubits, approx. 20 m.

241[*f*] *The Antonia* was built on a steep rock 50 cubits (approx. 25 m.) high. The rock was surfaced from its base upwards with flat paving stones that not only served as an ornament but also made the work of the attackers more difficult. It was rectangular in shape. The rock-cut platform (60×35 m.) probably formed the base of the principal buildings. The main entrance was on the west; it was connected with the Tyropoeon valley and the city's main commercial thoroughfare of the same name, as well as with the road leading north. On the south the Antonia was connected by steps with the northern end of the Temple's western porticoes. A battlement 3 cubits (4.5 m.) high surrounded the building; behind it the tower rose to a height of 40 cubits (20 m.). The full height of the tower was therefore 45 m. The inside, serving both as fortress and barracks, included halls, porches, baths and courts, and could house a large garrison. At the corners of the fortress rose four towers, two in the east and two in the west. The tallest of the towers, which rose to a total height of 37 m., was the tallest structure in the whole city. According to a reconstruction by P. B. Benoit, the fortress extended as far as the Via Dolorosa (including the convent of Notre Dame de Sion and part of the Monastery of the Flagellation). The Antonia garrison could control the rebellious masses which assembled especially on the occasion of the three annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem. The courts of the Temple were then full of tens of thousands of people and the slightest spark could cause a revolt. The Antonia also served as a place of safe-keeping for the sacred vestments of the high priest, which were handed over to those in charge of the Temple only on the eve of the festivals. (This was also one of the means used by Herod and the procurators to keep the Jews obedient.) If necessary, the soldiers could descend from the fortress into the northern and western porticoes of the Temple, which met near the Antonia.

242[*a*] 50 cubits, approx. 25 m.

242[*b*] 70 cubits, approx. 35 m.

243[*c*] The stairs from which Paul, when arrested, addressed Jews gathered below (Acts 21, 40).

244[*d*] *The Roman garrison at the Antonia* One cohort was generally stationed in Jerusalem, at least during the major festivals, its duty being to keep order there. Since we possess epigraphical evidence for the existence of a *Cohors Italica* of Roman citizens operating in the area, there are no reasonable grounds to doubt the information.

244[*e*] The Temple walls rose to 32 m. above the central valley of Jerusalem (Tyropoeon), 38 m. in their northeastern corner and 47 m. in their southeastern corner. In the past these walls would have presented a threat to the rule of Herod and the Roman procurators in Jerusalem were it not for the safe protection of the Antonia fortress, which was built in the northwest corner of the Temple and was garrisoned by troops loyal to the ruler.

245[*f*] The palace is described above V, 176 ff.

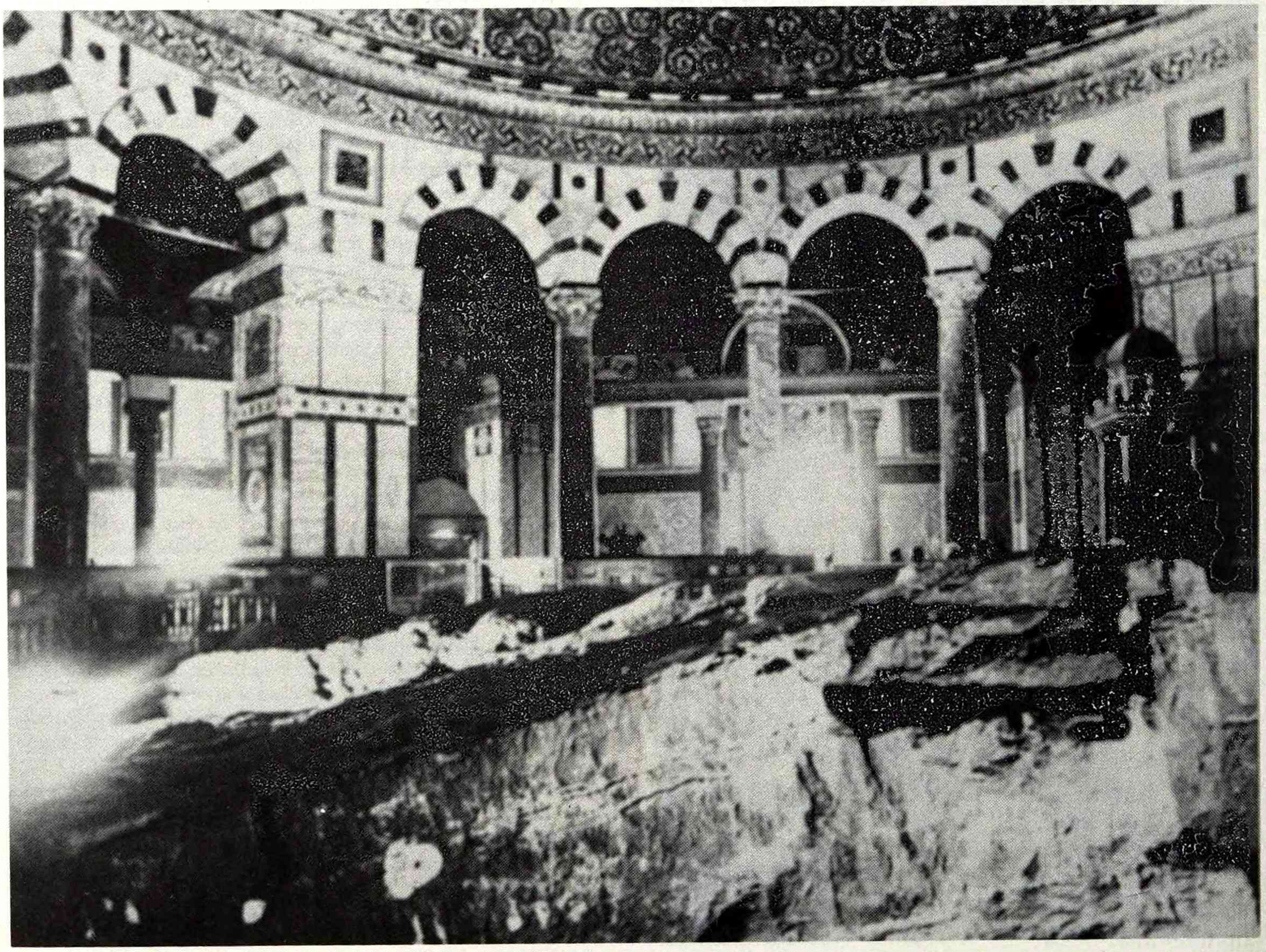
246[*a*] *Bezetha,* mentioned in V. 149. It was cut off as explained there.

246[*b*] Bezetha was the highest of all the hills in the Lower City and that part of the New Town (see map) spread over it; it was the only obstacle hiding the Temple area from the north.

247[*c*] Cf. 237[*e*] above.

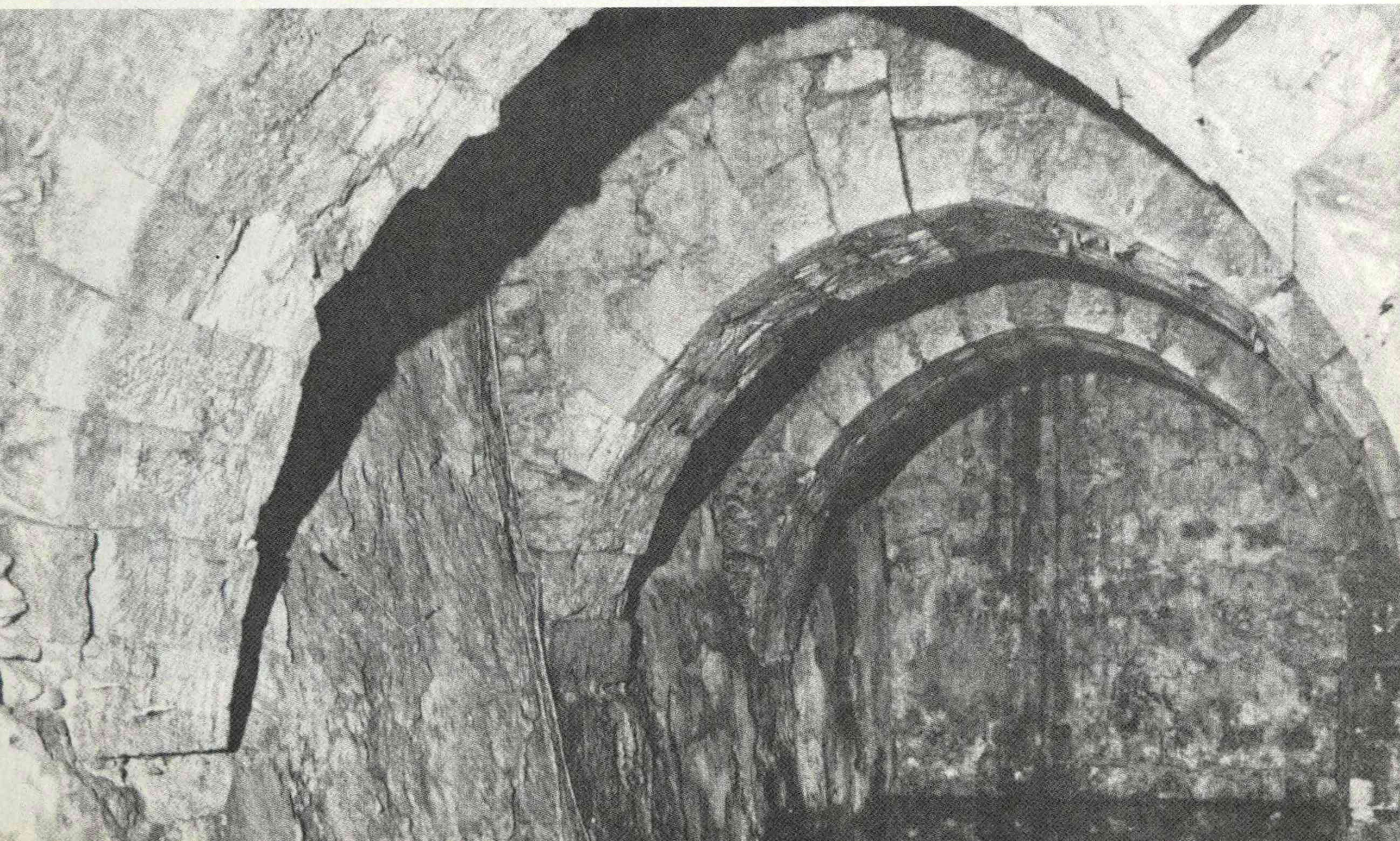
them, and by these the guards descended: (244) for a Roman cohort [*d*] was always stationed there, and at the festivals they took up positions in arms around the porticoes, to watch the people and repress any insurrectionary movement [*d*]. (245) For as the Temple served as a fortress dominating the city, so did Antonia dominate the Temple, and the occupants of that post guarded all three; the upper town had its own fortress at Herod's palace [*f*]. (246) The hill Bezetha [*a*] was, as I mentioned, cut off from Antonia. It was the highest of all the hills [*b*], and its rising ground was encroached on in part by the new town; it formed in the north the only obstruction which obscured the view of the Temple [*b*]. (247) As I propose in a later work [*c*] to describe the Temple and its walls in fuller detail, for the present this must suffice.

The multimillennial rock situated under the Islamic Dome of the Rock shrine on the Temple Mount is popularly identified with the site of the Holy of Holies of both Herod's Temple and Solomon's Temple, but this is disputed by serious scholars. Modern experts are not sure that Herod's Temple stood on this specific site

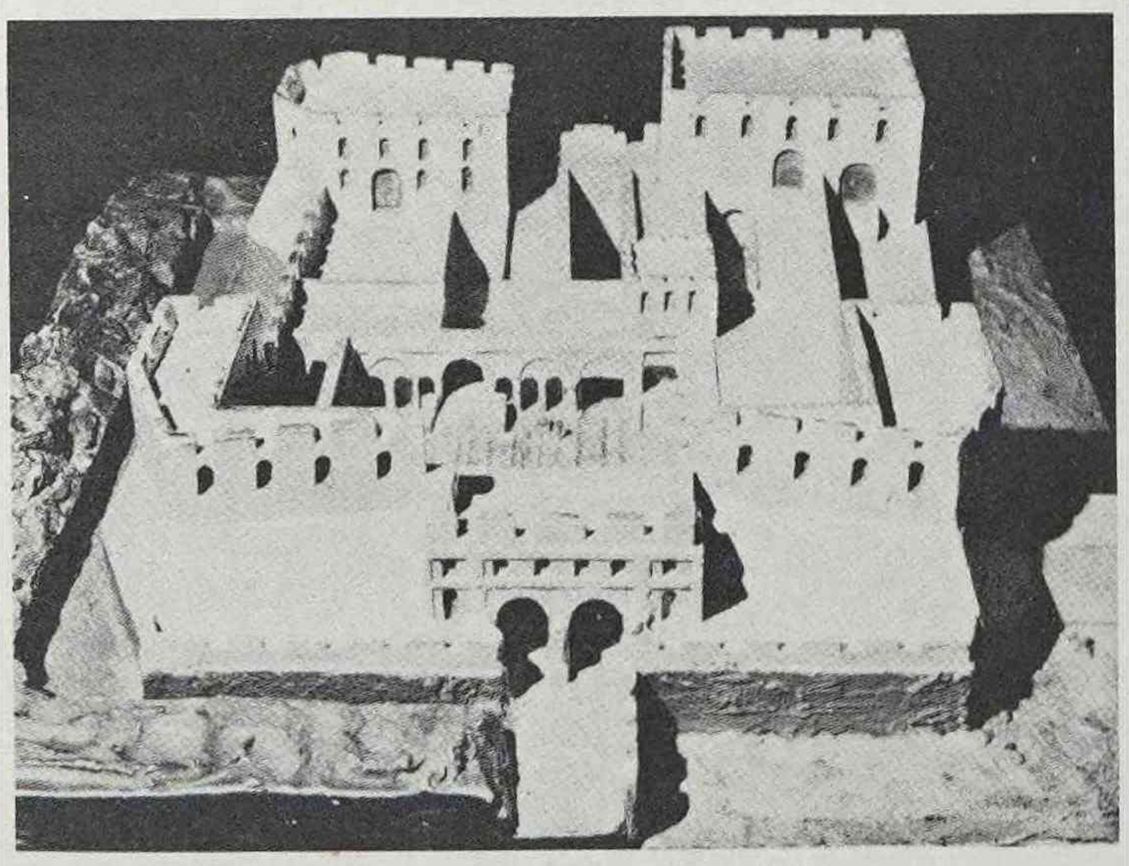


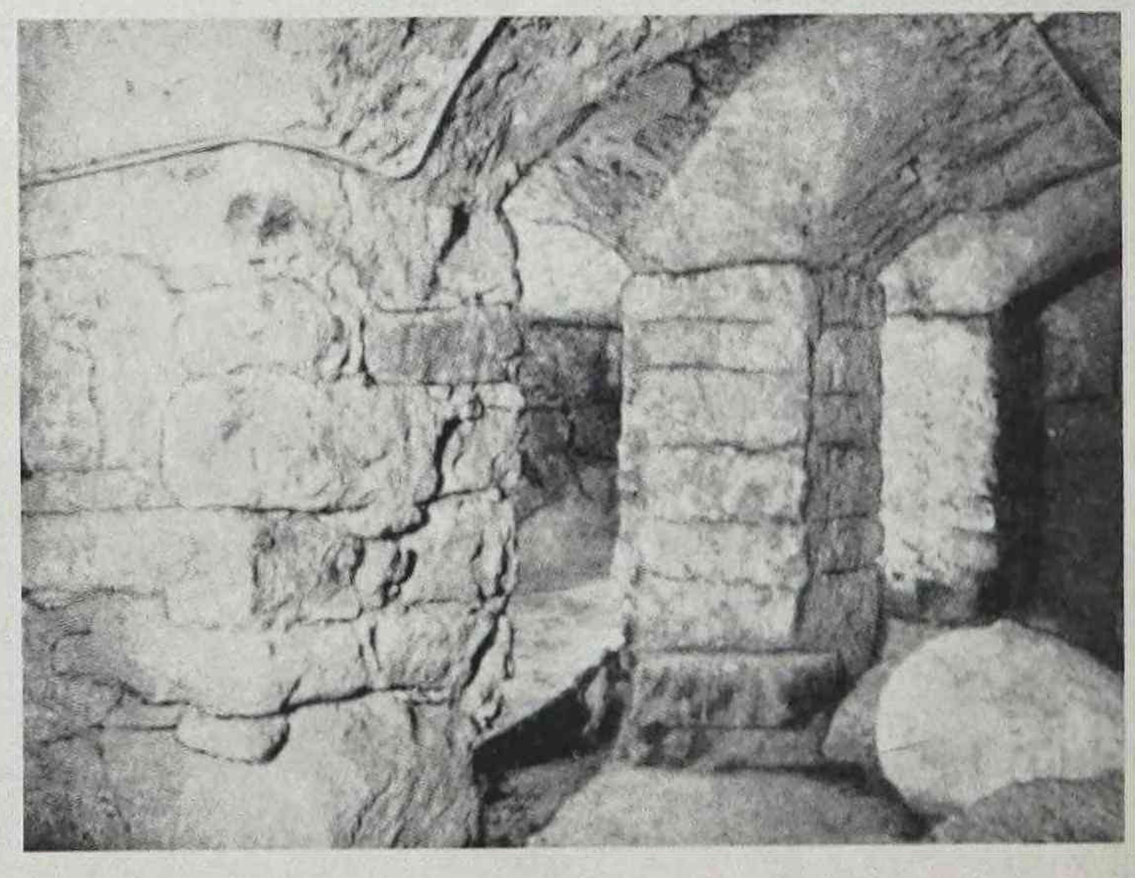
Various fragments of ceiling decorations from various parts of the compound, such as floral and geometric themes. *(See page 396)*

The Pool of Bezetha (Bethesda, house of grace). "In Roman days it was known as Piscina Probatica or, to the Jews, the Sheep gate; its waters were reputed to possess curative powers (John 5, 2 ff). They are identical with the twin pools (Eshdatayim) mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls" (B. Mazar) situated at the back of the Monastery of St. Anne



Above: A model of the Tower of Antonia according to Avi-Yonah's model. Below left: Model by P. Benoit O. P. Below right: Underground gallery of a construction below Hadrian's Arch of Triumph, dating to the 2nd century AD, believed to be part of the Antonia





D. TWO WALLS CAPTURED

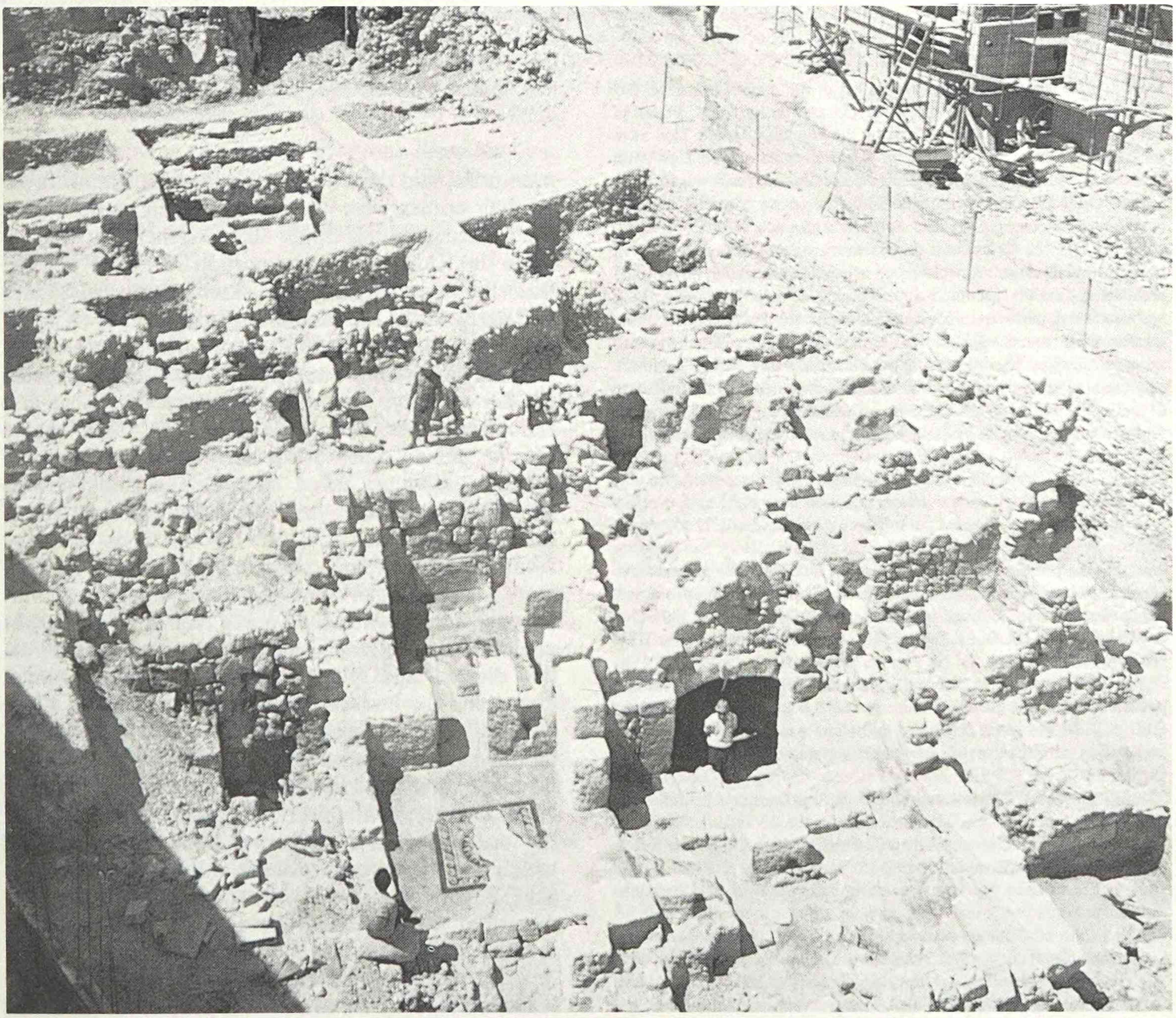
Chapter VI

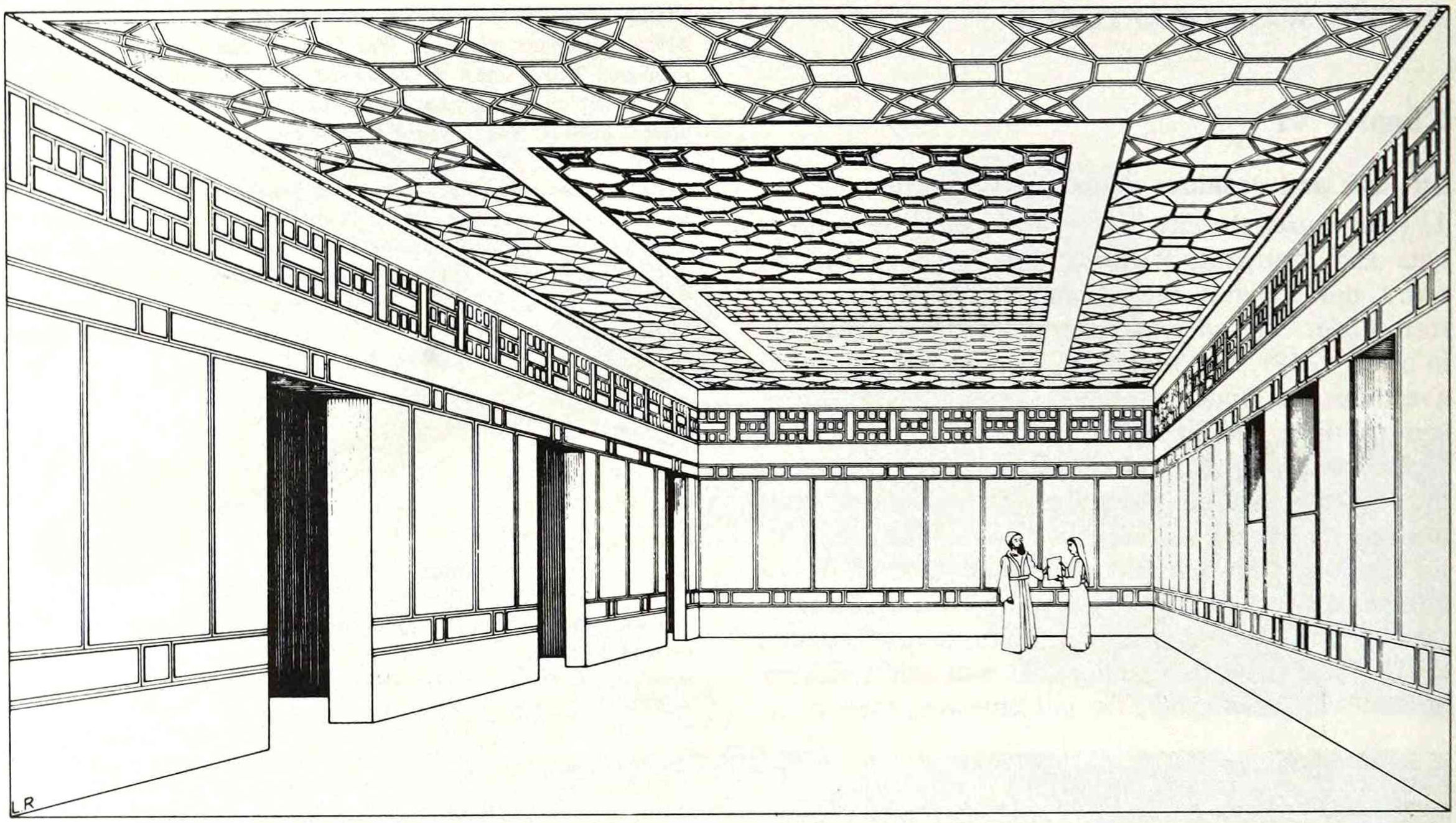
Strength and positions of the Jewish factions

1. (248) Inside the city [*a*] the strength of the combatants and insurgents was as follows: Simon had an army, not counting the Idumaeans, of ten thousand men, under fifty officers, with Simon as commander-in-chief. (249) His Idumaean contingent numbered five thousand, under ten chiefs, among whom James son of Sosas, and Simon son of Cathlas, were the accepted leaders [*a*]. (250) John [*b*], at the time he seized the Temple, had six thousand foot soldiers commanded by twenty officers; but now he was joined by the Zealots, who had laid aside their quarrel. These numbered two thousand four hundred, led by Eleazar, their former commander, and Simon son of Arinus. (251) While these two factions, as was said [*c*], were at war with each other, the citizens were their com-

248[*a*] The author reverts here to the war scene.
249[*a*] Josephus relates in *War* IV, 235 that the Idumaeans once numbered 20,000 under the command of James and Simon. Although IV, 353 implies that they had retired from Jerusalem, it appears from the present passage that only half of the force had withdrawn.
250[*b*] John of Gischala.
251[*c*] When all forces finally joined hands, the Jewish defenders of Jerusalem did not exceed 24,000. Though many scholars had reason to remark on the exaggerated numbers concerning the population of Judaea at the time (cf. *War* II, 280; III, 43), the number of the defenders of Jerusalem during the siege, is more realistically related here. The Romans on the other hand had prepared a force of some 80,000 including auxiliaries.

The excavations conducted by N. Avigad in the Upper City have uncovered the walls and mosaic floors of several houses dating to Herodian times and the 1st century AD. This section overlooked the Temple Mount and the Lower City south of the Temple Mount





Reconstruction of the reception hall in the home of a wealthy family. Its walls and ceiling feature the typical stucco decorations

252[*d*] *The Upper City,* seen on the left of the map of the siege. Excavations conducted mainly by N. Avigad and partly by M. Broshi in the present-day Jewish Quarter and on the adjoining Mount Zion have disclosed the stone-built houses of the well-to-do, embellished with frescoes in the current style which is decoratively architectural rather than pictorial. The frescoes, notable for their diversity of motifs, depicted birds on architecturally stylized floral backgrounds of trees, wreaths, buildings and the like. These motifs are geometrical or imitative of colored marble as are the colored panelings, as illustrated. Among the architectural motifs are three-dimensional paintings of dentils. Such architectural details were unknown until Hellenistic-Roman times. In the houses were found mosaics of remarkable beauty adorned with geometric designs; the chief colors were black, red and white. Corinthian and Ionic capitals of columns were also found there (as illustrated).

252[*e*] The "Great Wall" is the new Third Wall shown on the top left of the siege map in para. 3 of this book. It reached the Kidron valley, top right.

252[*f*] The "Old Wall" is the First Wall shown at bottom left and bottom. *Siloam* is the intramural area and pool in the valley, bottom right. It faces the outer extramural pool. (The old Siloam Pool, II Kings 20, 20.)

252[*g*] The positions of the palace of the Judaizing king Monobazus, surrounded by a court, and that of his mother's palace, both *intramural,* are not known in the Lower City (cf. *War* II, 520, IV, 567, V, 147). One may have been in the Ophel and closer to the southern gates of the Temple Mount.

253[*a*] The Fountain is "the outlet to the Siloam tunnel, the capital importance of which is the city's main municipal water supply" (B. Mazar, *ibid.,* p. 213). The water originated in the underground Spring of Gihon and flowed through the Siloam tunnel (celebrated in the story of II Chron. 32, 30).

253[*b*] *The Akra* "In this as in other writings Josephus identifies the Lower City with (the former) Akra... He seems to regard the Ophla (Ophel), on the other hand, as a special quarter abutting on the public square close to the Temple Mount" (B. Mazar, *ibid.,* p. 213).

253[*c*] The Palace of Helena was apparently near the Fountain (Siloam pool).

254[*d*] John of Gischala occupied the Temple Mount and the eastern wall which faced the Kidron valley on the east (see siege map).

254[*e*] *Ophla* The *Ophel,* a thickly populated section of the Lower City, south of the Temple Mount.

mon prize, and those people who looked with disfavor on their crimes were plundered by both parties. (252) Simon occupied the Upper City [*d*], the great wall [*e*] up to the Kidron [*e*], and a portion of the old wall [*f*] from the point where it bent eastward toward Siloam and descends to the mansion of Monobazus (King of Adiabene east of the Euphrates [*g*]). (253) He also held the Fountain [*a*] and part of the Akra [*b*], that is the Lower City, as far as the palace of Helena [*c*], Monobazus' mother. (254) John held the Temple Mount [*d*] and much of the surrounding area, Ophla [*e*] and the valley called Kidron. The area between them they reduced to ashes and left as the arena of their mutual hostilities. (255) For not even when the Romans were encamped beneath the walls did the civil strife inside cease; they returned briefly to comparative sanity when they made their first sortie, but afterwards again resumed their civil war, and the parties divided and fell to fighting once more, doing everything the besieger would have prayed for. (256) Certainly they suffered nothing worse at the hands of the Romans than what they did to each other, nor did the city, after her experience with them, suffer any worse calamity than this; on the contrary, she suffered her cruelest disaster before she fell, and the relief which her destroyers brought outweighed the loss. (257) Indeed, I maintain that the internal dissensions destroyed the city, and the Romans overcame the sedition, which was far more stubborn than her fortified walls; and that the misery of it all may be reasonably put down to her own people, the justice of

Dedicatory stone from a 1st century AD synagogue in the Ophel, a short distance from the Temple. The Greek inscription reads: "Theodotus son of Vettenos who was priest and Archisynagogos, and grandson of Archisynagogos, built this synagogue for reading the Law and teaching the commandments; also the hospice, chambers and water installation for the services of visiting guests from abroad. This synagogue was founded by his ancestors and the elders and Simonides." The family that initiated this project may have come from Rome and settled in Jerusalem. The synagogues served for learning and daily prayer

it to the Romans [*f*]. But let everyone draw his own conclusions and in the light of the facts his own way.

2. Titus' point of attack; the beginning of the earthworks' erection

(258) Such being the state of affairs inside the walls, Titus with some picked horsemen, made a tour of inspection outside, looking for the best point of attack against the walls. (259) Seeing no hope at all in other points, there being no access across the ravines, while beyond them the first wall seemed too solid for his engines, he decided to deliver his assault opposite the tomb of John the high priest [*a*]. (260) At this spot the first line of ramparts was on lower ground [*b*], and the second did not join with it, the builders having neglected to fortify the portions of the new town which were sparsely populated [*b*], while there was an easy approach to the Third Wall [*c*], through which he planned to capture the Upper City and so, through the Antonia, the Temple Mount. (261) While he was riding around the city, one of his friends, Nicanor [*d*], was wounded by an arrow in the left shoulder when he approached too near with Josephus, while endeavoring to parley about peace with those on the walls, who knew him well. (262) This brought home to Caesar their animosity, since they would not refrain from assaulting even those who approached them to save them; it spurred him to begin the siege. He at once gave the legion leave to devastate the surburbs and ordered timber to be collected and earthworks erected. (263) Dividing his army into three sections for these operations, he stationed the javelin men and archers

257[*f*] This is analogous to his expressions of deep sorrow in other parts of this book as well as *Antiquities* I, 108, II, 348, III, 81.

259[*a*] This may be the tomb of King John Hyrcanus I (134-104 BC; *War* I, 54[*f*]).

260[*b*] This site is often mentioned as a landmark (V. 304, 356; VI, 169) and is situated apparently near the Water gate of the Hippicus tower and the Pool of Hezekiah (Amygdalon—Hamigdal in Hebrew) where the Romans repeatedly attacked the First Wall but were repulsed by the defenders. Before the time of Josephus, the Second Wall actually marked the general line of the built-up area of Jerusalem, for, as he notes here, the Third Wall was built by King Agrippa to include a large open area, on the assumption that the town would—and did—continue to grow northwards (see map of the siege). This western area of the city wall was topographically more accessible than the others which generally rest on steeper ground. Josephus insists in this passage on the presence of lower ground in a section opposite Hyrcanus' tomb, apparently in a depression of the ground (it was later covered by buildings, streets and the wall) and asserts that the early builders had neglected to fortify this once less populated quarter of the New Town (see top of map). In other words, the expansion of the town made this point strategically questionable. This particular position may have been in the area where the Third Wall started from the Hippicus tower in the Citadel (*War* V, 147). We do not know whether or how the two wall systems (the First and the Third) were juxtaposed or interlocked to form a continuous line of defense, but may note that the First Wall at the Citadel was of Hasmonean construction while the new Third Wall was Herodian (by King Agrippa I). The answer to this architectural riddle may throw light on Josephus' two paragraphs. In any case, this was the position Titus chose for his first breakthrough. Another example of the juxtaposition of two systems of city walls may be found a short distance further south, on Mount Zion, where old Hasmonean wall remnants lie almost at the foot of the later and more imposing Herodian western First Wall. The two structures lie very close together without being interlocked or joined. As they both lie on steep inclines, they were not attacked by the Romans. Furthermore, the propable low situation of the site below the Hippicus tower is accentuated by its proximity to the abandoned Pool of Hezekiah, identified in our city map, and lying immediately back of the wall in a declivity of the terrain. It was strategically more accessible to

the battering of Roman war engines and to other assaults. It will be noted that Titus did not storm the new northern (Third) wall. "Instead he went around it, to the astonishment of the Jews, and attacked the Third Wall from the west, not far from the Hippicus tower"... Since there had been no confrontation at the northern line (wall), Josephus had no compelling reason to note its existence (M. Broshi, *Biblical Archaeologist,* Vol. 40, 1; p. 22).

260[*c*] *The breaching of the Third Wall* The story of the siege of Titus show how inefficient Agrippa's work had been. The Roman general was the only one to attack the city not from the convenient north side, but from the west near the Jaffa gate of today. This change in the line of attack was due to the existence of the Third Wall, or due to inside information rovided by people who were thoroughly acquainted with Jerusalem and its defense. One of them was Tiberius Alexander, the nephew of Philo, who had been a governor of Judaea, and who served under Titus as chief-of-staff. The other was Josephus himself. The plan chosen by Titus on their advice included a breach of the Third Wall near the Jaffa gate, followed by an immediate attack on the First Wall, which was not protected by the Second Wall in that spot, as will appear further. By taking the Upper City, the Romans could have hoped to end the siege at one stroke. However, this plan failed; the First Wall proved too strong and the defenders too energetic. Titus was thus obliged to occupy the new town after breaching the Third Wall (see 260[*b*]), and then to attack the Second Wall. The final assault came by way of the Antonia, and thus led to the fall of the Temple and the Lower City within ten days.

261[*d*] *Nicanor,* a tribune and friend of Josephus whom he saved at Jotapata (*War* III, 346).

263[*e*] Quick-firers, dubbed "scorpions" or catapults which shot arrows; stone-throwers were *ballistae.*

266[*a*] John was afraid to move away from the Temple and participate in assaults lest Simon-bar-Giora capture the area.

267[*b*] Cestius Gallus, in November AD 66 (*War* II, 554).

267[*c*] Captured in August AD 66 (II, 430).

268[*d*] The deserters may have come from the ranks of the Syrian or Samaritan auxiliaries accompanying the Roman army. Dio Cassius refers to such deserters (66, 5) in no pejorative terms.

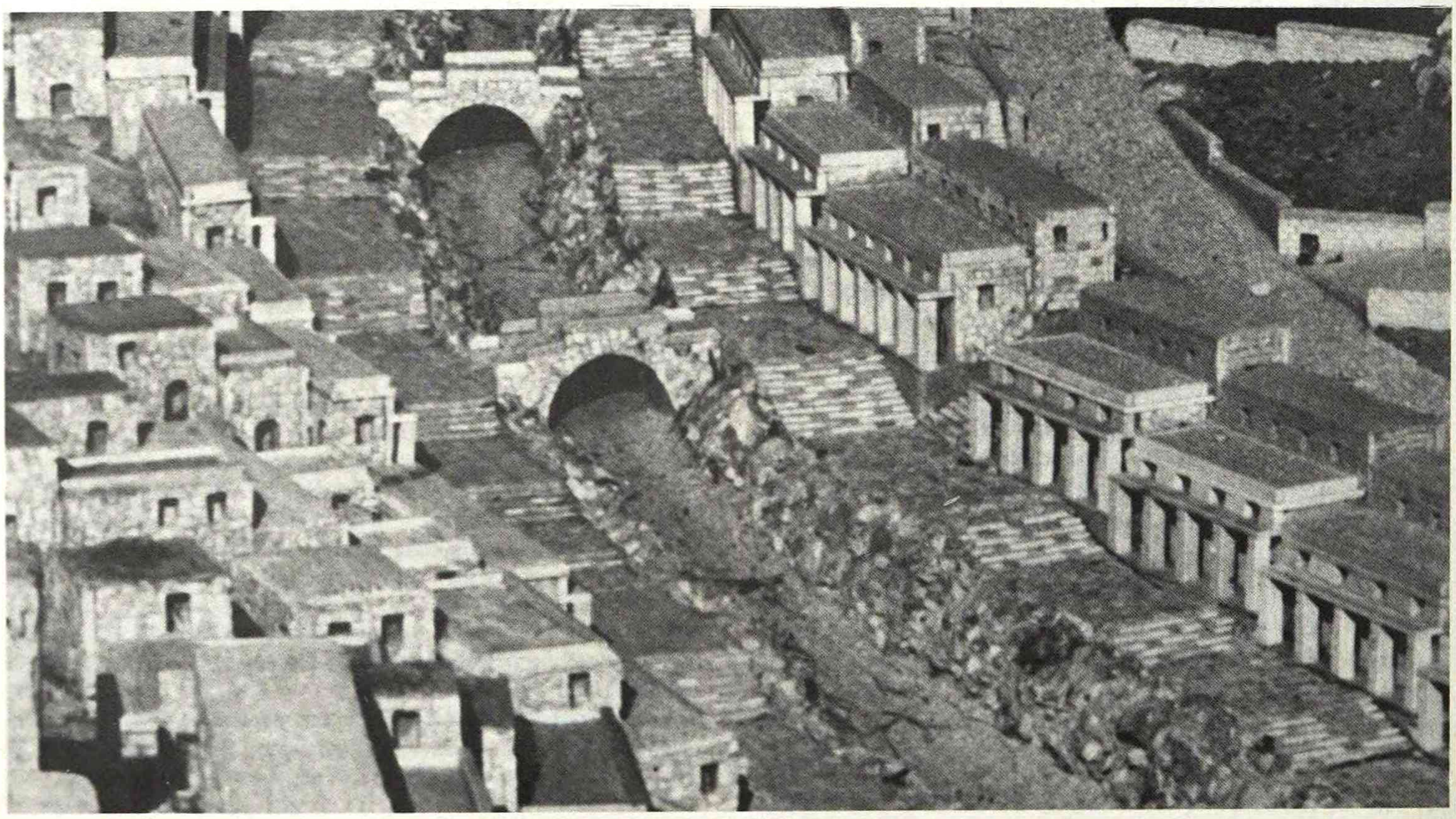
269[*e*] Namely, the Roman workmen or soldiers.

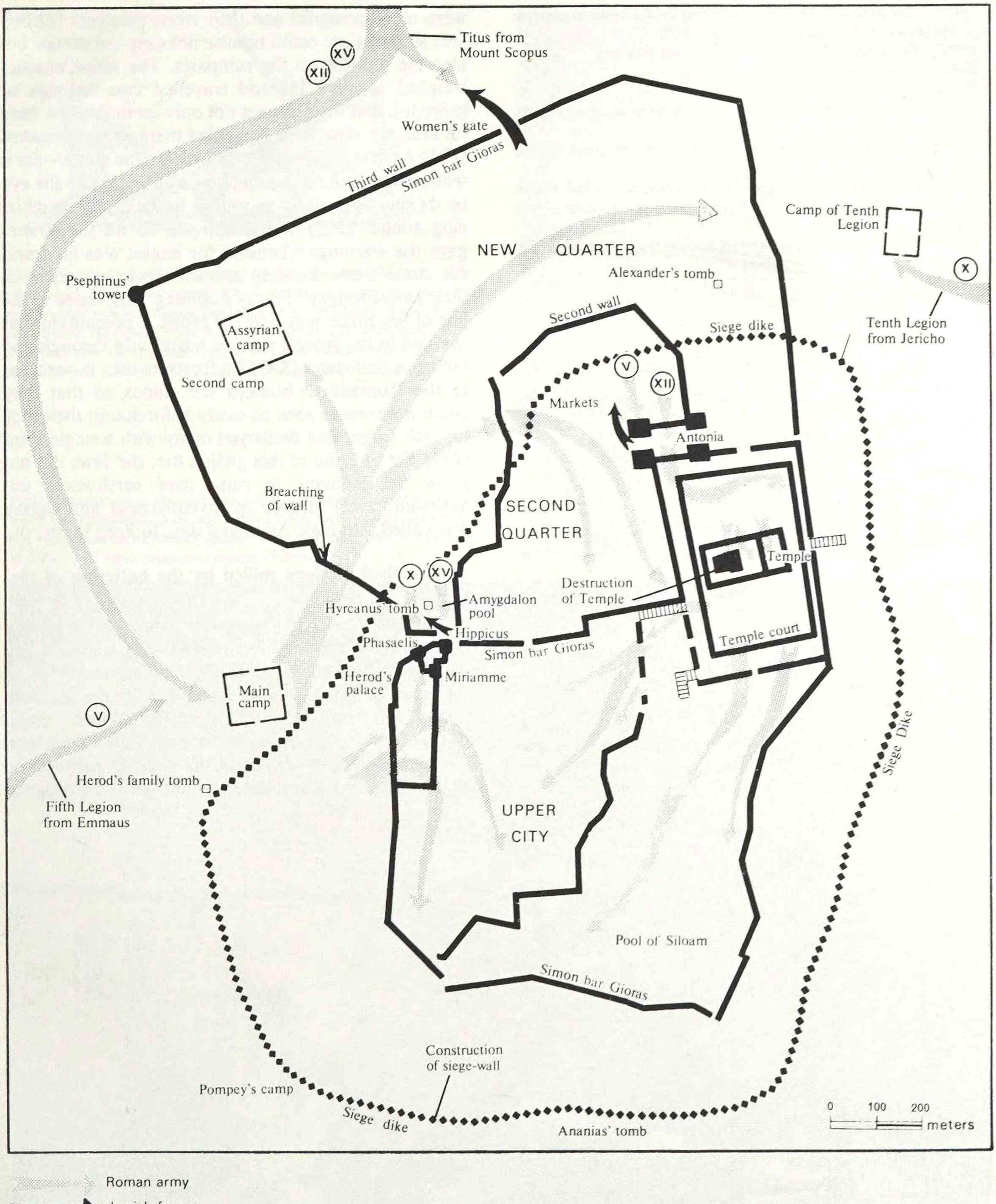
The breaching of the Third Wall by Titus took place at the place indicated in the map on p. 371 near the Hyrcanus Tomb (today Jaffa gate area). It is now occupied by the Latin Patriarchate

between the embankments, and in front of these the quick-firers [*e*], catapults, and stone-throwers [*e*] to prevent any sorties of the enemy against these works and any attempted interference from the walls. (264) So the felling of the trees quickly stripped the suburbs bare, but while the timber was being collected for the earthworks, and the whole army busily engaged in the works, the Jews on their side were also active. (265) Consequently, the ordinary people who were victims of rapine and massacre now recovered their spirits, hoping that they would enjoy a breathing spell while the enemy without kept their oppressors busy, and that they would have their revenge on the culprits if the Romans were victorious.

3. Jewish attacks and Roman artillery assaults

(266) But John, though his men were eager to attack the enemy outside, was immobilized by fear of Simon [*a*]. (267) Simon, on the other hand, was active, being nearer to the besiegers. He posted his artillery upon the ramparts, both the engines which they had formerly taken from Cestius [*b*] and those captured when they overpowered the garrison of Antonia [*c*]. (268) These, however, were useless for them, due to inexperience; but following instructions from some deserters [*d*], a few managed to make bungling use of them; from the wall they also showered stones and arrows on the builders and, dashing out in groups engaged them in close combat. (269) The workmen [*e*] were shielded from the missiles by wicker shields stretched across palisades and protected from the enemy's sorties by the artillery. The engines of all the legions were masterpieces of construction, but those of the tenth [*f*] were supreme. (270) Their quick-firers [*a*]





The caption "breaching of wall" on the left identifies Titus' breakthrough. The shaded lines indicate the progress of the Roman legions.
See also map of the siege on p. 319

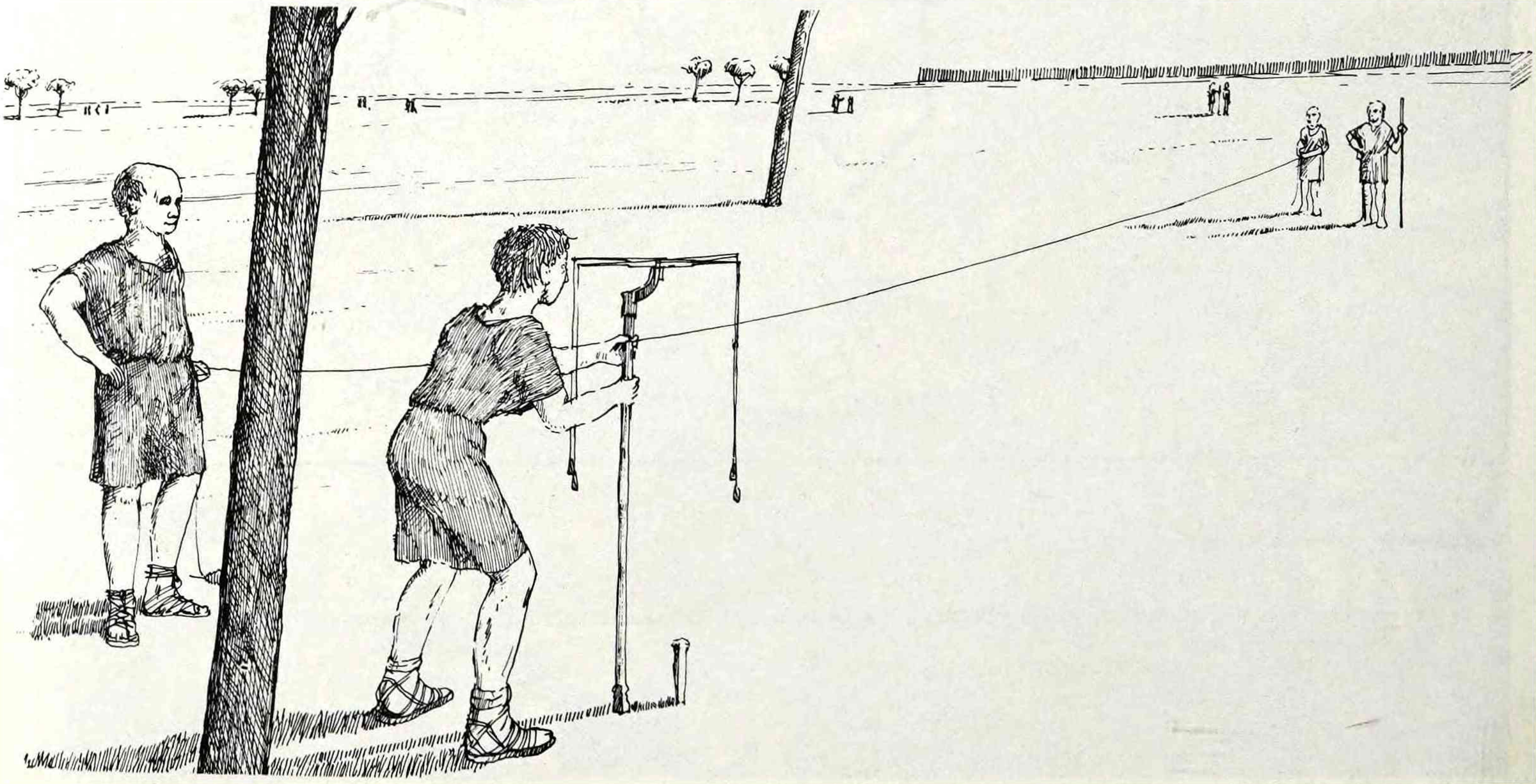
269[*f*] The tenth legion and its camp facing the Hyrcanus monument; cf. the problematic position described in 260[*b*].
270[*a*] Cf. 263[*d*]. The heaviest ballistae were involved.
270[*b*] A talent weighed approx. 45-50 kgs.
270[*c*] 2 furlongs approx. 375 m.
272[*d*] *Sonny's* In Hebrew *Ha-ēben,* meaning the stone; this may have been jocosely corrupted to *ha-bēn* (son).
275[*a*] *Lead and line* Measuring cord used in measuring and dividing land (Psalm 78, 55).
275[*b*] *Embankments* Earth, stone and wood ramparts heaped against the walls in preparation for a direct assault and emplacement of war engines.
276[*c*] *Artillery* Titus had at his command the best siege equipment of the period.

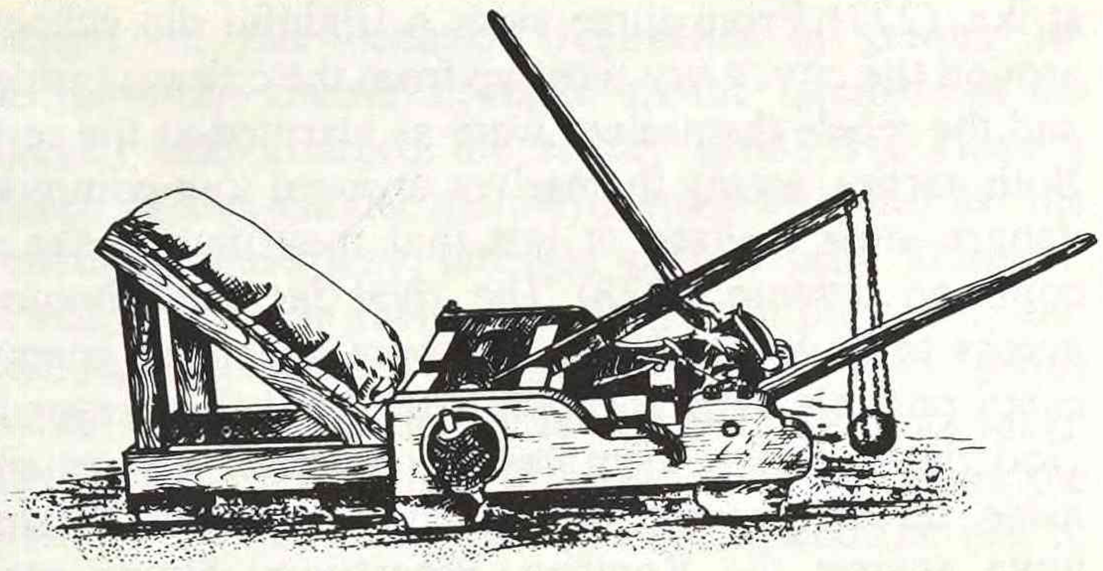
were more powerful and their stone-throwers [*a*] bigger, so that they could repulse not only the sorties but also the fighters on the ramparts. The stone missiles weighed a talent [*b*] and travelled two furlongs or more [*c*], and their impact not only on those who were hit first, but also on those behind them, was enormous. (271) At first the Jews kept watch for the stone—for it was white—and its approach was intimated, to the eye by its shining surface, as well as to the ear by its whizzing sound. (272) Watchmen posted on the towers gave the warnings whenever the engine was fired and the stone came hurtling towards them, shouting in their native tongue "Sonny's coming" [*d*]; those in the line of fire made way and fell prone, a precaution that resulted in the stone's passing harmlessly through and falling in their rear. (273) To frustrate this, it occurred to the Romans to blacken the stones so that they could not then be seen so easily beforehand; then they hit their target and destroyed many with a single shot. (274) Yet, in spite of this galling fire, the Jews did not allow the Romans to raise their earthworks unmolested; every degree of inventiveness and daring was called into play, night and day, to keep them out.

4. The rival factions rallied by the battering of the walls

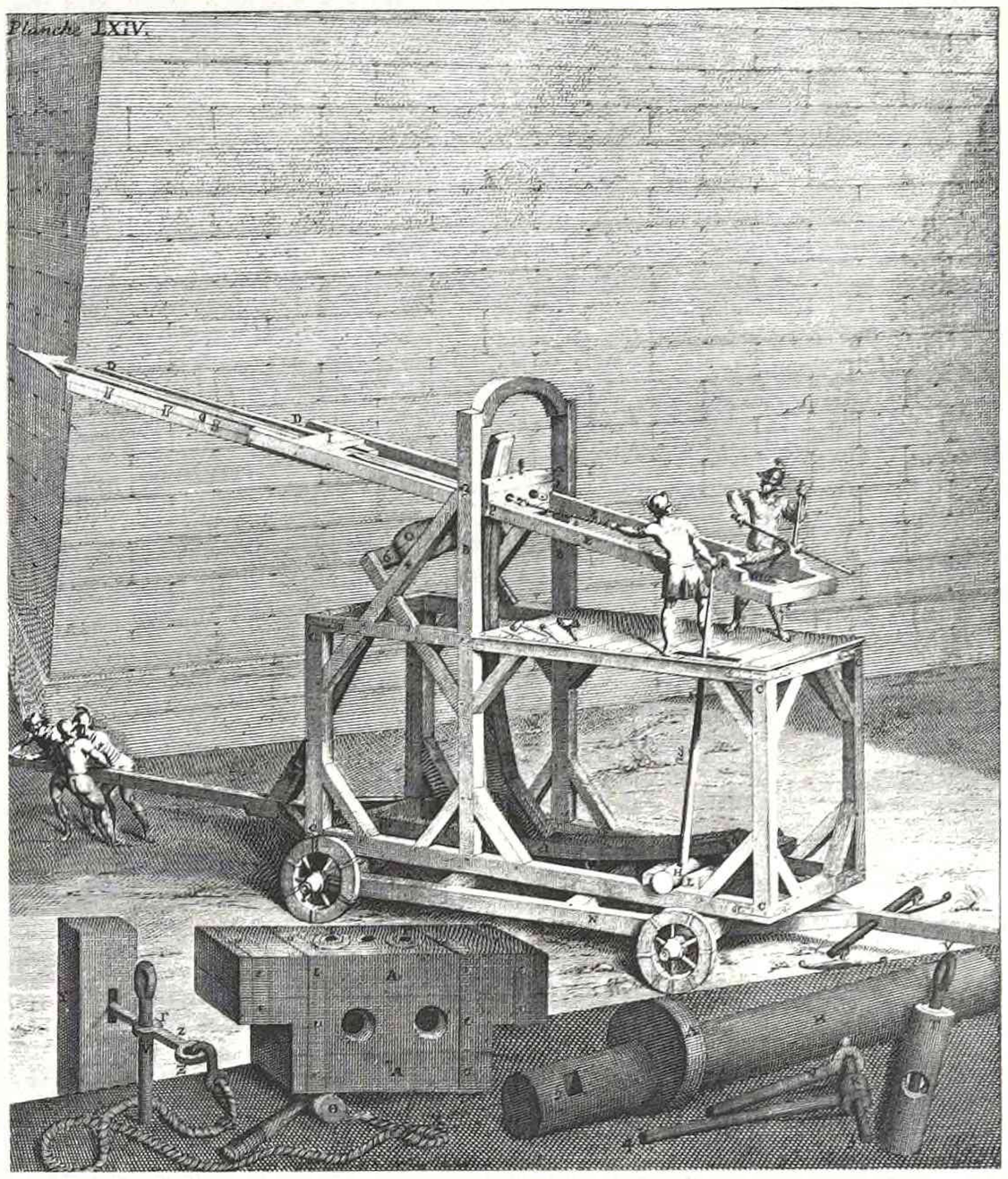
(275) When the works were completed, the engineers measured the distance to the wall with lead and line [*a*] which they threw from the embankments [*b*] as there was no other possible method under the fire from above; and when they found that the batterers could reach the wall, they brought them up. (276) Titus then posted his artillery [*c*] nearer the walls to prevent the Jews from obstructing the rams and gave the order to

The Romans measured distances by means of the groma, *a pole some four feet high topped by a cross laid flat. When weighted strings hanging from each end of the cross hung parallel to the pole, it was known to be perpendicular to the ground. The objects under survey could be marked by sighting down the intersections of the cross*



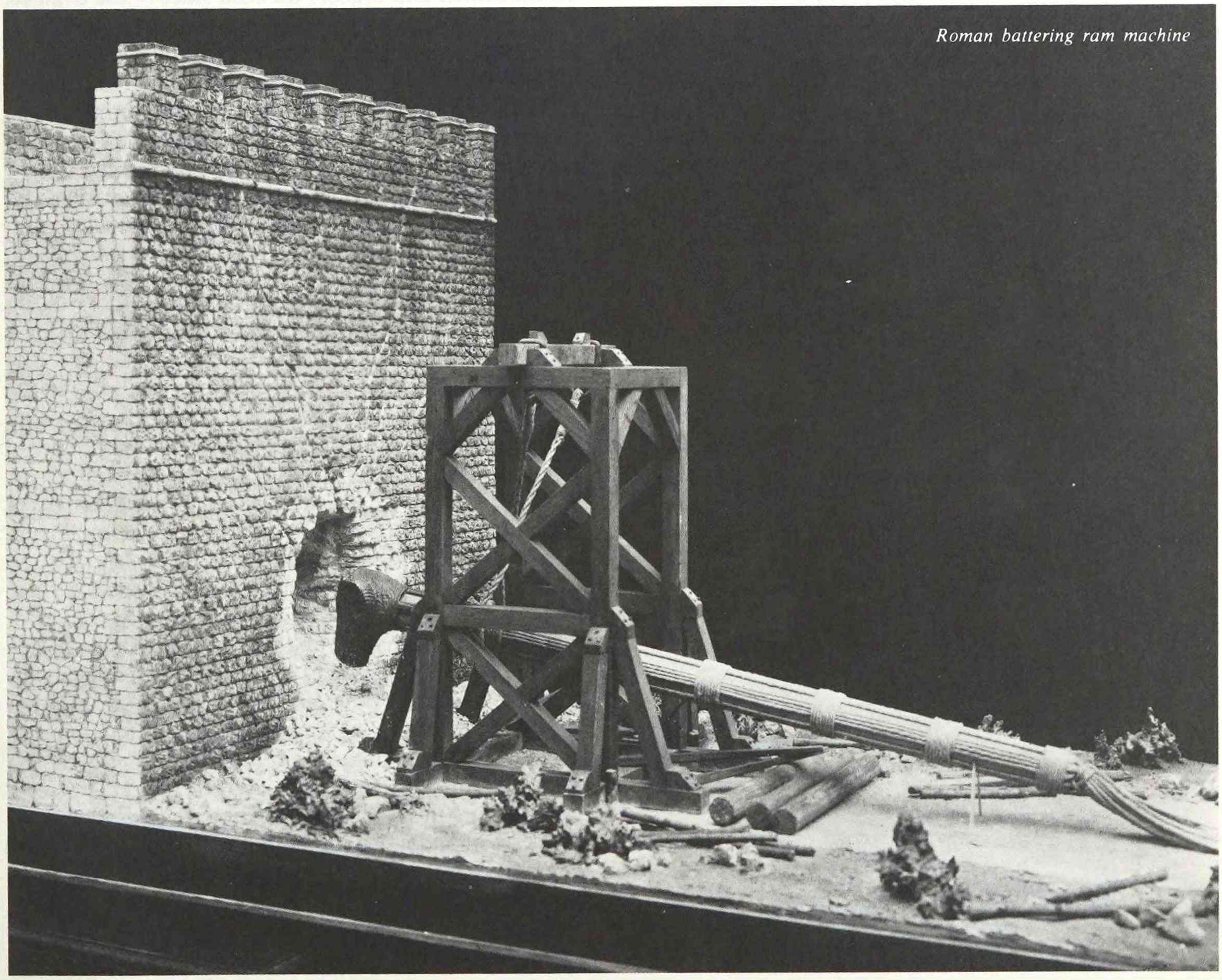


The largest catapults were the onagri *(named after the wild ass because of its kick). They threw stones of such enormous weight that they not only crushed men and horses, but broke enemy machines. When used in siege-works, they could make holes in the walls, and when used by the defenders they could smash siege towers and wooden machines. They could be very effective against the massed ranks of attackers*



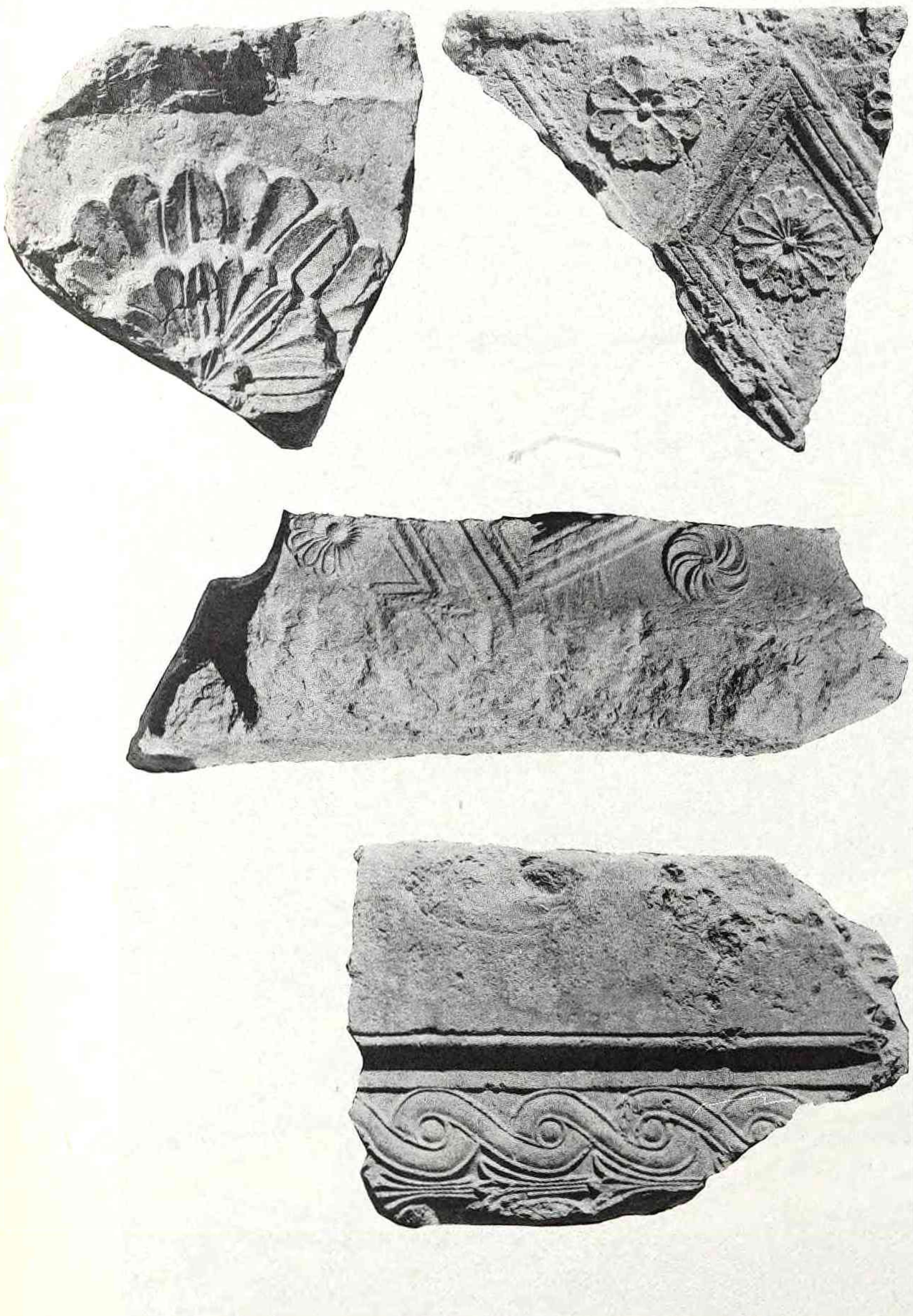
Right: In addition to the ram (see below) the Romans used the borer, which was equipped with an iron-pointed beam moving on numerous rollers that made its movement quieter. Such machines were screened by rawhides and other protective devices (Vitruvius)

Roman battering ram machine



278[*d*] *His compatriot* Simon commanded the Second Wall and the Third Wall (in the west which was under attack) while John commanded the eastern Wall and the Temple Mount; which meant that he had to move out of his entrenched position in the latter.
280[*e*] *Screens* Wicker shields for protective covering.
288[*a*] Suetonius also relates that Titus shot twelve men with his large bow during the conquest of Jerusalem *(Div. Titus* V).
288[*b*] In summary, as the city's layout itself demanded, Titus had directed his offensive against the northern side, hence against the outermost Third Wall (or from the standpoint of the attackers, First Wall). It was only then, as the battering rams began their work at some three points, that the internal fighting ended and both parties, those of John of Gischala and Simon-bar-Giora, joined forces. After fifteen days' work, one of the battering rams knocked a hole in the wall, the Romans broke in, and in Iyar (June) obtained control of the First Wall (cf. 299-302 below).

Architectural fragments from the ruined Temple found in the excavations (see also the page opposite)



strike. (277) From three sides a frightful din echoed around the city, a cry went up from the citizens inside, and the rebels themselves were as alarmed as the rest. Both parties, seeing themselves exposed to a common danger, now realized at last that they must make a common defense. (278) The rival factions shouted across to each other that they were giving the enemy every possible assistance when the right thing, even if God did not give them lasting concord, was to set aside, for the present at least, their mutual strife and unite against the Romans. Whereupon Simon proclaimed that everyone was at liberty to proceed from the Temple to the wall, and John also [*d*] gave his permission, though he mistrusted his compatriots [*d*]. (279) The parties, forgetting their hatred and private differences, became one body; and manning the ramparts, they hurled showers of firebrands at the engines, and kept those who were working the battering engines under constant fire. (280) The bolder spirits, dashing forward in bands, tore to pieces the screens [*e*] over the engines, and falling on the gunners, overpowered them, not so much by skill as by intrepidity. (281) Titus himself never failed to come personally to the aid of those who were hard pressed and, posting his horsemen and archers on both sides of the engines, kept the fire-throwers at bay, repulsed assailants from the towers, and got the battering-rams into action. (282) Yet the wall did not give way under the blows, except that the ram of the fifteenth legion damaged the corner of a tower. (283) But the wall itself was undamaged, for it was not in the same immediate danger as the tower, which projected far out and so could not easily bring down with it any part of the main rampart.

5. The Jews repulsed after their sortie

(284) The Jews, having suspended their sorties for a while, watched for their opportunity when the Romans had scattered to their tasks and about the camps, under the impression that the defenders had withdrawn through exhaustion and terror. Suddenly all dashed out together through a concealed gate near the Hippicus tower, in order to set fire to the works and determined to push their attack right up to the Roman entrenchments. (285) At their shouts the legionaries near the spot mustered and those further away came running up. But Jewish daring outstripped Roman discipline; they routed their foremost opponents and proceeded to attack the assembling troops. (286) A furious battle was joined around the engines, one side striving to set them on fire, the other to prevent them; confused shouts arose from both and many of those in front were killed. (287) The Jews were gaining the advantage through sheer desperation; fire had already caught hold and the works would have been set on fire along with the engines had not the picked troops from Alexandria (with few exceptions) stood firm, displaying a gallantry that surpassed their own reputation—for indeed they sur-

passed on this occasion regiments of greater renown—until Caesar brought up the strength of his cavalry and charged the enemy (288). He killed a dozen of the leading men with his own hand [*a*] the remainder gave way, terrified at their fate. Titus followed and drove them in a body into the town, and rescued the works from the flames [*b*]. (289) In this battle it happened that a Jewish prisoner was taken alive. Titus ordered him to be crucified [*c*] before the walls in the hope that the sight might lead the rest to surrender in dismay. (290) Moreover, after the withdrawal, John [*d*], the chieftain of the Idumaeans, was talking before the walls to a soldier of his acquaintance, when he was struck in the breast by an arrow from an Arab's [*e*] bow and killed on the spot. This loss caused profound shock to the Idumaeans and grief to the Jewish insurgents; for he was distinguished both for his prowess and sound judgment.

Chapter VII

1. A night of panic in the Roman camp

(291) The next night the Romans themselves were alarmed by an unexpected occurrence. (292) Titus had ordered the construction of three towers, 50 cubits high [*a*] to be set up on the respective embankments [*b*] so that he might repel from there the defenders of the ramparts, and one of these fell down spontaneously in the middle of the night. (293) The tremendous crash caused panic, and the terrified troops, believing that the enemy were upon them, all rushed to arms. (294) Alarm and confusion seized the legions. As no one was able to say what had happened, they scattered in all directions in their perplexity, and, sighting no enemy, became frightened of one another, (295) and everyone asked his neighbor for the password in a hurry, as if the Jews had broken into their camps. In fact, they were like men in the grip of panic, until Titus, learning what had occurred, gave orders to make the facts generally known and, with an effort, they recovered from their alarm.

2. The withdrawal of the Jews

(296) Though the Jews stood up stubbornly to every other form of attack, they suffered severely from the effects of these towers, because they were pelted by the lighter engines, the javelin-men, archers, and stone-throwers. (297) On their lofty perches [*a*] these assailants were beyond the range of the Jews, who could not capture the towers, overturn them because of their weight, or set them afire because of the iron that encased them. (298) If, on the other hand, they withdrew beyond the range of missiles, they could no longer check the battering of the rams, whose incessant impact was gradually taking effect.

289[*c*] The author, who on so many occasions vaunts Titus' benevolence, occasionally shows very evident proofs of this general's cruelty.

290[*d*] *John,* the first named of the four original Idumaean chieftains (*War* IV, 235), where he is mentioned as the brother of James (Jacob) son of Sosas, who outshone him (cf. V. 249). This may be the same James who betrayed his allies and made a pact with Simon-bar-Giora (V. 249).

290[*e*] *Arabs* Nabateans.

292[*a*] 50 cubits or 25 m.; they stood, therefore, higher than the Third Wall (which was only 25 cubits high, approx. 12 m.) and were prepared for a direct assault.

292[*b*] Cf. 275[*b*]. The three iron-clad towers served as sheds under which a gang of men could work at the foot of the wall, digging down to get underground, or making a hole in it.

297[*a*] "Lofty perches," cf. 292[*a*].

Pillar and crown from a house in the Upper City

299[*b*] *Distance from the city* The northwestern and western part of the Third Wall were approximately 610 m. away from the heart of Jerusalem, and the intervening recently built area—though protected by the Third Wall—was not so thickly populated (cf. V. 246). Hence the citizens who were set to guard these very long ramparts were sleep-weary as well as afraid to scatter their defense over such a wide area. But in so doing they sealed the fate of the inner Second Wall which was older and weaker than the Third.

300[*c*] *Two other walls* The First or Old Wall and the Second (*War* V, 142[*f*]).

301[*d*] The Second and inner wall which protected the Upper City, the *Mishnēh* quarter, the Lower City, and the Temple Mount area (the heart of the city).

302[*a*] It was the First Wall which the Romans occupied, but also the western end of the Third Wall, as described in V. 147 ff. The Third Wall, had been rendered useless.

302[*b*] *Artemisius* May AD 7 or the 17th of Iyar, according to the Hebrew calendar.

302[*c*] Cf. II, 530. In November 66, Cestius had set fire to the new Bezetha quarter and Timber Market (see map); the Jews at the time concentrated in their old quarters while the Third Wall (intended to protect the new quarters) had not yet been completed by King Agrippa.

303[*a*] *Assyrian camp* Traditional site of the camp of the Assyrian generals of Sennacherib (who came to demand that King Hezekiah surrender the city, then withdrew; II Kings 18, 17). The camp, according to M. Avi Yonah's map, is situated in the northwestern area of greater Jerusalem and within the area circumscribed by the Third Wall.

304[*b*] *Tomb of Alexander* Namely King Alexander Jannaeus (104-78 BC, *War* 1, 85) who was given a splendid funeral by his widow (*Antiq.* XIII, 406). His mausoleum apparently stood north of the Second Wall which was at that time outside Jerusalem, but later became the site of the Bezetha quarter.

304[*c*] The brunt of the Roman assault was the undefended section behind the breach in the Second Wall.

304[*d*] *John Hyrcanus,* high priest and king (135-104 BC) and father of Alexander Jannaeus. The tomb is referred to in V, 259.

304[*e*] The reference seems to point to the site referred to in V, 284. Many authorities, among them M. Avi-Yonah, believe that the Upper City probably had two gates on the west, one a Water gate for Herod's citadel and palace (see map) and the other apparently leading to the markets in the new town (either of these might be the Gennath gate mentioned by Josephus as the beginning of the Second Wall). (Cf. 142-143[*a*] above).

309[*a*] *Simon regarded with reverence and awe; his rise as a leader* We have already evaluated him in comparison with Menahem the first Zealot leader (see notes IV, 162[*a*]; II, 433[*a*]) as regards the eschatological forces attached to their personalities. It is important for a reader of Josephus to wend his way through the maze of events and still be able to weigh Josephus' own evaluations of the warring parties. Fortunately, considerable help can be offered by modern historians. *Simon-bar-Giora* was certainly the most charismatic figure among leaders of the Revolt (cf. also the intrepretation of John of Gischala's leadership under IV, 106-116, 121, 125, 208-226, 389-395, 559-566; V. 4 ff, 98-105, 250, 254, 266, 274, 304). Though Simon was not bolstered by family traditions (he came from a family of converts to Judaism which originated in the Hellenistic town of Gerasa, important in the cultural life of Peraea), he is to be regarded first and foremost as the leader of the lower classes in northern Judaea, Peraea, and Idumaea. Little is known of his henchmen. One was a nephew (VI, 227); others were Hanan (*War* II, 229), Ardalas (VI, 300), Castor (V, 322) and Judah son of Judah (V, 534). Among the salient characteristics of his behavior was the inflexible attitude he showed to the wealthy during the first stages of his career (II, 650), for which Josephus accuses him of "entering a career of tyranny"; added to this was his freeing of the slaves (IV, 508). It must be remembered that slaves, even those not of Jewish origin, were circumcized by their masters and, after they were freed, became an integral part of the Jewish society and nation. Whether or not he had the intention of abolishing slavery is not known, but such an extreme attitude is unparalleled in the Greco-Roman world. "It is possible to trace the steps of his rise to power and to see how by degrees he became spokesman for exten-

The Roman breakthrough (7th Iyar, [June 70] in the Hebrew calendar; see maps on p. 319 and 371)

(299) Already the wall began to succumb to "Victor" (for so the Jews nicknamed the biggest Roman engine from its victory over all obstacles). The defenders were by now worn out with fighting and watching on night duty at a distance from the city [*b*]. (300) Moreover, through indolence and their constantly misguided judgment, they deemed it a waste of effort to defend this wall, as two others remained behind it [*c*]. (301) Most of them, accordingly, slacked off and retired; and when the Romans climbed in through the breach which Victor had made, they all left their posts and fled back to the Second Wall [*d*]. Those soldiers who had scaled the walls now opened the gates and admitted the whole army. (302) Having thus mastered the first wall [*a*] on the fifteenth day of the siege—the seventh of the month of Artemisius [*b*]—they demolished a large part of it together with the northern quarter of the city, which had been destroyed earlier by Cestius [*c*].

3. Titus' encampment inside the outer wall

(303) Titus now moved his camp inside the first wall to the so-called Camp of the Assyrians [*a*], and occupied all the ground between it and the Kidron, but keeping out of bowshot of the Second Wall; then he immediately proceeded to attack. (304) Now dividing their forces, the Jews maintained a stubborn defense from the ramparts; John's division fought from the Antonia, from the northern portico of the Temple, and in front of the tomb of Alexander [*b*], while Simon's troops intercepted the assault [*c*], near the tomb of John the high priest [*d*] and manned the wall as far as the gate [*e*] through which water was conveyed to the Hippicus tower [*e*].

The desperate nature of the fighting before the second wall

(305) Over and over they would dash out of the gates and fight hand to hand, and though chased back to the wall and worsted in these close combats, being far less skilled than the Romans, they scored in the battles from the ramparts. (306) The Romans' mainstay was a combination of strength and experience, while the Jews were sustained by courage, nourished by fear and by their inborn fortitude, in calamity. And they still cherished hope of survival, as did the Romans of quick victory. (307) Neither side showed any signs of flagging; assaults, battles at the wall, sorties at company strength went on continuously throughout the day; no method of attack was left untried. (308) Beginning at dawn, night hardly brought respite, and there was no sleep for either side as the night was less endurable than the day, one party expecting every moment the capture of the wall, the other a Jewish invasion of their camps. Both armies thus passed the night under arms, but at the first glimmer of dawn they were ready for battle.

Contrasted motives of the belligerents

(309) Among the Jews there was rivalry as to who should show outstanding courage and so win favor with his officers; Simon was held in particular respect and awe [*a*], and such was the esteem in which he was held that none under his command would have hesitated to kill himself at his bidding. (310) The Romans, on the other hand, drew valor from the habit of victory and unfamiliarity with defeat, their continuous campaigning and perpetual training, the vastness of their empire, and above all the fact that Titus always, and in every place, stood by every man. (311) To show cowardice when Caesar was present and fought along with them was unthinkable, while the man who fought valiantly had as witness of his valor one who would also reward it; indeed, he was rewarded already if Caesar had recognized his courage. As a result many in their enthusiasm displayed courage beyond their strength.

The feat of Longinus

(312) On one of these days it occurred that the Jews were drawn up in full force outside the walls, and the opposing lines were still engaged in distant combat with javelins. Then Longinus, a cavalryman, leapt out of the Roman ranks and charged into the midst of the Jewish phalanx. (313) Scattering them by his charge, he slew two of their most stalwart men, striking one in front as he advanced to meet him, withdrawing the spear and transfixing the other through the side as he turned to flee; then he dashed back unscathed to his own lines from the midst of the enemy [*a*]. (314) His valor gained him distinction and there were many who imitated him. (315) The Jews, on their side, heedless of their suffering, were only concerned with the injury they could inflict, and death was to them a trifle if only it involved one of the enemy. (316) Titus, on the other hand, was as anxious for the safety of his men, as for victory itself, and, declaring that incautious impetuosity was mere desperation, and heroism heroic only when coupled with prudence and regard for the actor's own safety, he ordered his men to display their manhood without risk to their own lives [*b*].

4. The ruse of Castor the Jew

(317) Titus now brought up the battering-ram against the middle tower of the north wall [*a*], where a certain Jewish impostor, named Castor, lay in ambush with ten others like himself, the rest having fled before the archers. (318) These some time remained motionless, crouching behind the parapet, but when the tower began to rock, they stood up and Castor, holding out his hands as in supplication, called upon Caesar in heart-rending tones and implored him to have mercy on them. (319) Titus, guileless himself, believed him, and hoping that the Jews reputed at last, stopped the battering of the ram, forbade shooting at the supplicants and invited Castor to state his wishes. (320)

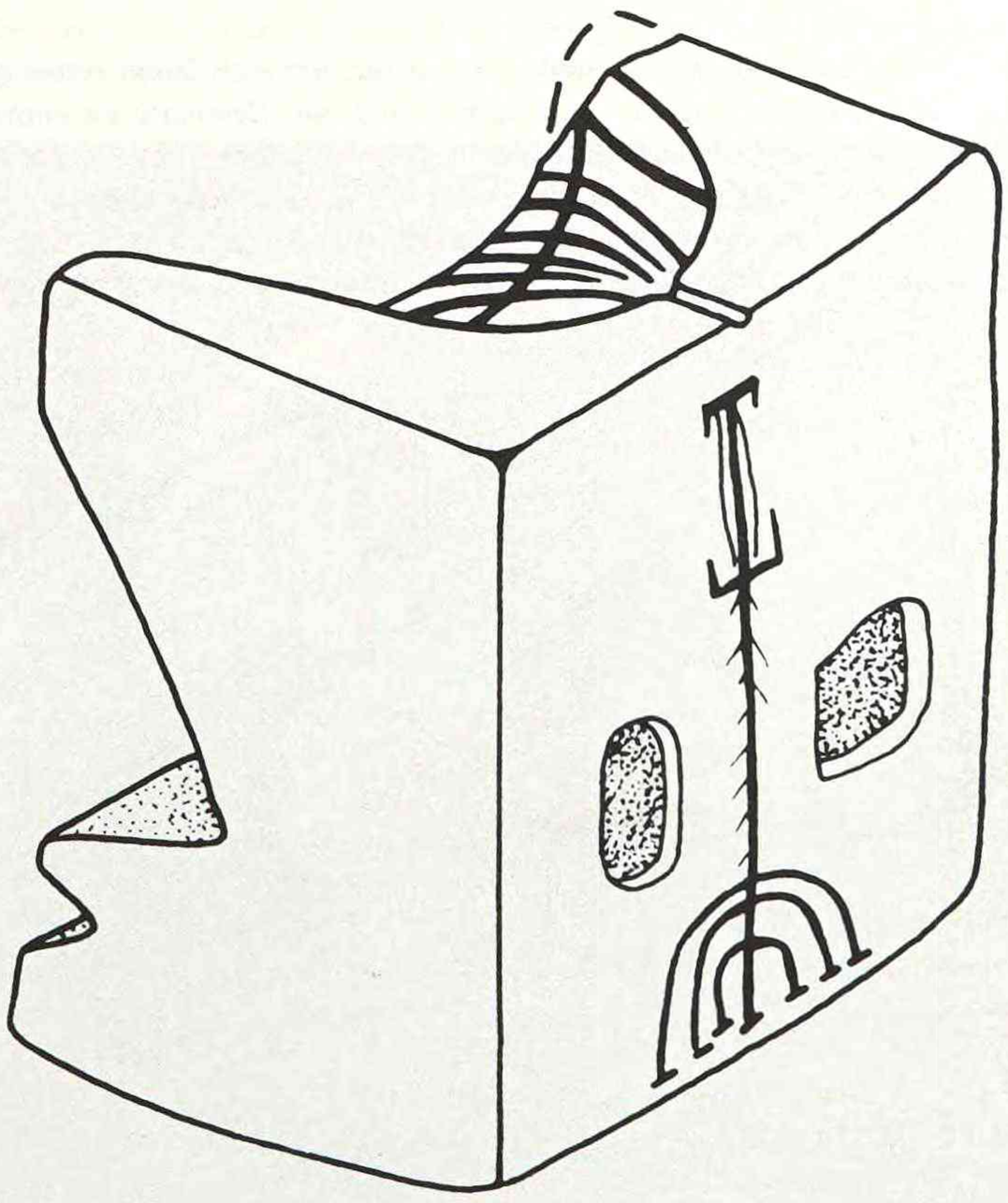
sive groups in western Palestine. Apparently his influence in the villages of Judaea and Idumaea on the eve of the siege proved decisive, the possibility having been mentioned (II, 433[*a*]) that to the ranks of his fighters were joined many of the Sicarii who had lost their traditional leadership with the murder of Menahem" (M. Stern, *ibid.*, 285). Simon is also noted for his courage and physical strength (IV, 524). His influence continued to grow and encompassed wide circles, his followers obeying his commands as if he were a king (IV, 510). As a result of his control over the villages of Judaea and Idumaea, friction increased between him and the leadership in Jerusalem composed of the Zealots and John of Gischala. All opposed to the Zealots fled from the capital and found refuge with Simon (see also IV, 556-564; 573-584). "In any case, the fact remains that of the 23,400 men who defended Jerusalem at the time of the siege... 15,000 were listed as followers of Simon or attached to his command. Thus it was only natural for the Romans to regard him as the outstanding commander of Jewish Jerusalem (M. Stern, *ibid.*, 285).

313[*a*] As a rule, the Jews refrained from fighting with the Romans outside the fortified cities both in Galilee and in Judaea, as is evident in *War* III. The Jewish forces were particularly at a disadvantage in the open when cavalry charged them (in *Life* 24, Josephus shows an understanding of the cavalry in a plain; and *ibid.* 71, how the Jews feared the horsemen). Another example, in *War* III, 12, is the Jewish defeat at Ascalon, where Jewish footmen fought against cavalry

316[*b*] The Romans planned to break through the Second Wall by fighting fiercely. According to Tacitus, *Histories,* V, II, Titus was anxious to get back to Rome, enjoy the new government of his father and the pleasures that the city could offer. That is why the Romans did not raise up earthworks—a time-consuming process—but edged close to the Second Wall with their artillery, while the Jews fought back savagely (cf. 305-316 above) fearing that the Second Wall would not be able to withstand Roman battering. They tried also to repulse the engines, and *Dio Cassius* relates in his *History of Rome* (50, 4) that for the next four days they managed through several stratagems to block their approach, but were finally repulsed.

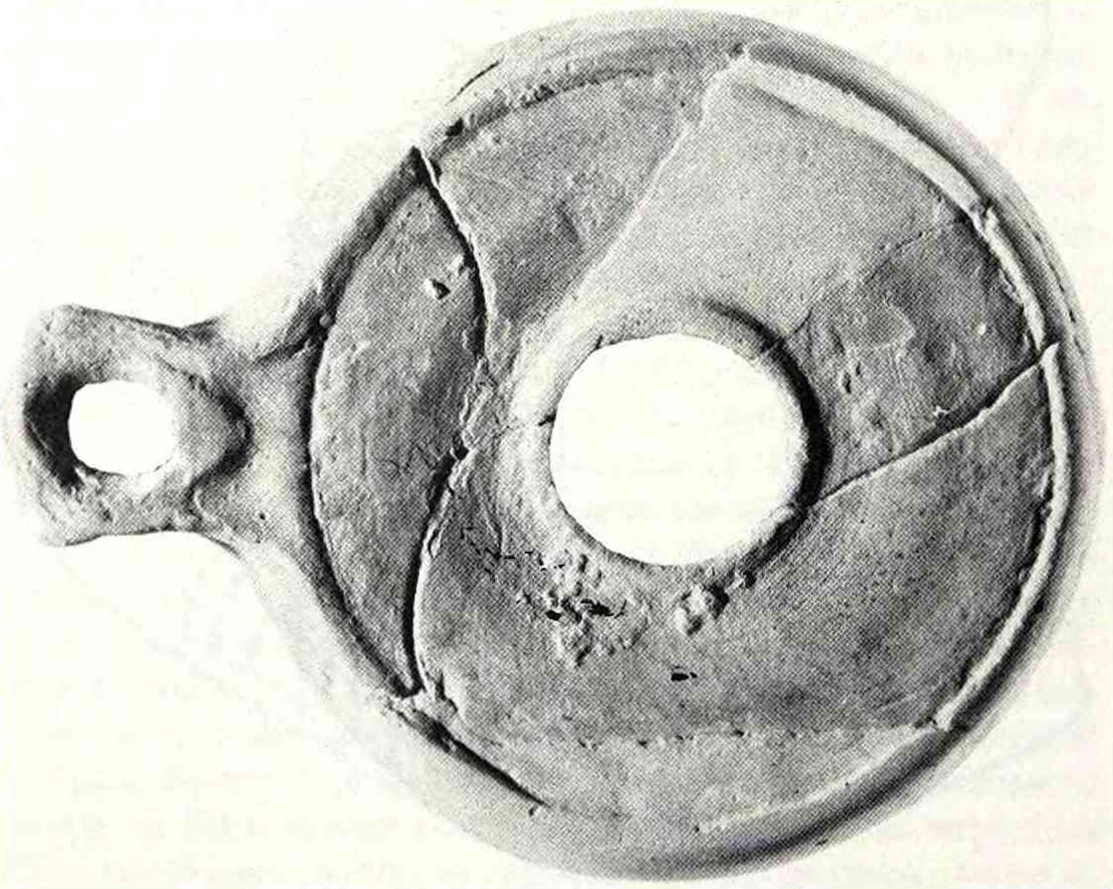
317[*a*] *The North Wall* derived this appellation because it faced that direction alone and stood north of the Upper and Lower City (the older quarters and of the Temple Mount).

A sundial found in the excavations of the foot of the Temple Mount



325[*b*] *Josephus,* now a free man in the Roman camp, was called upon to advise and mediate between the Romans and the Jewish fighters, and he was naturally aware of all the subterfuges used by his countrymen.
325[*c*] *To offer his hand* To convey Titus' guarantee to Castor and shake his hand on it.
327[*a*]-329[*a*] *The episode of Castor and the fate of deserters,* and Castor's deception of the Romans contributed to the Romans' wariness of deserters and defectors. In particular this can be understood in the light of Dio Cassius' statement (*History,* XVI, 5) that Jewish deserters at times attacked the Romans and slew them behind the lines, or sabotaged the wells and denied the Romans any water. Titus decided eventually not to accept deserters from Jerusalem any more. But this policy of the Romans is not to be explained altogether on the basis of caution only. It may well be that this attitude emanated originally from among the Roman commanders with a view toward justifying their stern measures (cf. 329) and brutal treatment of the Jews. In fact, it was a common Roman practice, followed by Vespasian and Titus, to confine those who surrendered or deserted and to concentrate them in special guarded places lest the defectors should change sides when the opportunity was offered. Their feeling was that with all the mass of information that reached the Roman commanders from the deserters and spies among the insurgents, they could never be sure of the character of the defectors. In sum, despite the passages where Josephus tries to tell his readers that Titus and Vespasian were compassionate to the deserters, the historic truth may lie elsewhere.
330[*b*] The Jewish general Niger effected a similar escape (*War* III, 27); but in this case Castor is dubbed an impostor *(goitis)* and is also described as a prestidigitator conjuring, as it were, a leap into the blazing fire.
331[*c*] *This spot,* namely the Second Tower of the North Wall (cf. 317). The Second Wall was assaulted both on the 12th of Iyar of the Jewish calendar (May 30) and the 16th year of Iyar (June 5, AD 70). It did not hold out longer than five days against the onslaught of the battering rams, and the Romans breached it on the fifth. Their only difficulty was in afterwards taking the warren of narrow alleys and markets behind. This is easy to visualize as we compare the ancient area to its present mean condition, an example of a typical "casba." See 338[*b*] below.
331[*d*] *After capturing the first* Referring to the breakthrough of the Second Wall, cf. 302.

Oil lamps: fats and olive oil were used as fuel for wick lamps made of clay. If left on the floor, a small lamp could not illuminate an entire room; thus lamps were often placed in a recess in the wall, on a projecting shelf, or on a slightly elevated pedestal, as indicated by Jesus' parable: "Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house" (Matt. 5, 15 and parallels)



When the latter replied that he desired to come down under pledge of immunity, Titus expressed delight at his good sense and vowed he would congratulate the city if all were now of the same mind, and gladly offered them security. (321) But while five of Castor's men pretended to join him in this feigned supplication, the rest protested that they would never be slaves of the Romans while they could die as free men. (322) During the protracted wrangle, the assault wall held up and Castor sent word to Simon to take his time in deciding the necessary steps, as he could delude the Roman command for quite some time yet. At the same time as he sent his message he made it appear that he was urging the objectors to accept the proferred pledge. (323) They, however, made a show of indignation, brandishing their naked swords above the breastworks, then struck their own breastplates and fell down as though slain. (324) Titus and his staff were dumbfounded at the men's intrepidity, and being unable to see from below just what had happened, admired their courage and pitied their fate. (325) At this point Castor was struck at the side of his nose by an arrow; he at once drew it out and showed it to Titus, complaining of unfair treatment. Caesar sternly reprimanded the archer and appointed Josephus [*b*], who was standing by, to offer his hand [*c*] to Castor. (326) Josephus, however, not only refused to go himself, convinced that the petitioners meant no good, but restrained those of his friends who were anxious to step forward. (327) However, Aeneas, one of the deserters [*a*], volunteered to go and when Castor called for someone to receive the money he had with him, Aeneas ran forward and spread out his garment to receive it. (328) Castor promptly picked up a boulder and hurled it at him. He missed Aeneas, who dodged out of the way, but wounded another soldier who had come up. (329) When Caesar saw that he had been tricked, he decided that it was harmful to show pity in war—sterner measures [*a*] gave less scope for tricks—and, furious at this mockery, he put the battering-ram [*a*] to work with greater force. (330) When the tower was on the point of collapse, Castor and his men set fire to it, and, leaping through the blaze into the vault below, again gave the Romans the impression of fortitude by apparently plunging into the fire [*b*].

Chapter VIII

1. The Romans' capture of the second Wall on two occasions (12th and 17th Iyar [June 70] in the Hebrew calendar)

(331) Caesar captured the wall at this spot [*c*] on the fifth day after capturing the first [*d*] and, as the Jews had fled from it, he made his entry with a thousand legionaries and his own picked bodyguard in that part of the new town where the woolshops, the braziers'

smithies and the clothes-market were, and where the narrow alleys ran slantwise to the wall. (332) Now, if he had at once demolished a longer stretch of the wall [*a*], or, having entered by right of conquest, sacked what he had captured, his victory would not, I imagine, have been reversed. (333) As it was, because he hoped to shame the Jews by refusing to injure them when in a position to do so, he refrained from widening the breach to ensure a retreat, never imagining that they would plot against their benefactor. (334) After his entry he forbade his troops to kill any persons caught or to set the houses afire; he offered a free exit to the factions who would be able to continue fighting if they wished, without harming the people [*b*], and he promised to return the citizens' goods and property! His chief concern was to preserve the city for himself and the Temple for the city.

The Romans ejected in a short time

(335) The people indeed had long been ready to act as he advised, but the militants took his humanitarianism for weakness and regarded his overtures as due to his inability to occupy the rest of the city. (336) Threatening the townfolk with death if any should mention surrender and murdering all who uttered a word about peace, they attacked the Romans who entered the wall [*a*]. (337) Some attacked them from the houses, some confronted them in the streets, while others, who made a dash outside the wall by the upper gates [*a*], caused such a commotion among the guards on the ramparts that they jumped down from the towers and withdrew to their camps. (338) A clamor arose from those inside, completely surrounded by a ring of enemies, and from those outside, in fear for those left behind. The Jews, every moment more numerous, and at a great advantage through their knowledge of the streets [*b*], wounded multitudes of the enemy, and by their charges thrust them before them. (339) The Romans, on their side, having no choice, continued to resist, for it was impossible to escape in a body through the narrow breach in the wall [*c*], and the entire invading force would presumably have been annihilated had not Titus come to the rescue. (340) Placing his archers at the ends of the streets and making his own stand where the enemy was the thickest, he stopped the advance with showers of arrows, aided by Domitius Sabinus [*d*], who, in this battle and others, showed his worth. (341) Thus Caesar stood his ground, keeping a constant stream of arrows flying, stemming the advance of the Jews till his men had retired.

2. (342) After capturing the Second Wall, the Romans were driven out again. The partisans within the walls, elated by their success, were overjoyed, convinced that the Romans would never again venture into the city or, if they did, they themselves would be invincible. (343) For God was blinding their minds

332[*a*] The Second or "North" Wall.

334[*b*] He later made a similar offer; cf. VI, 95.

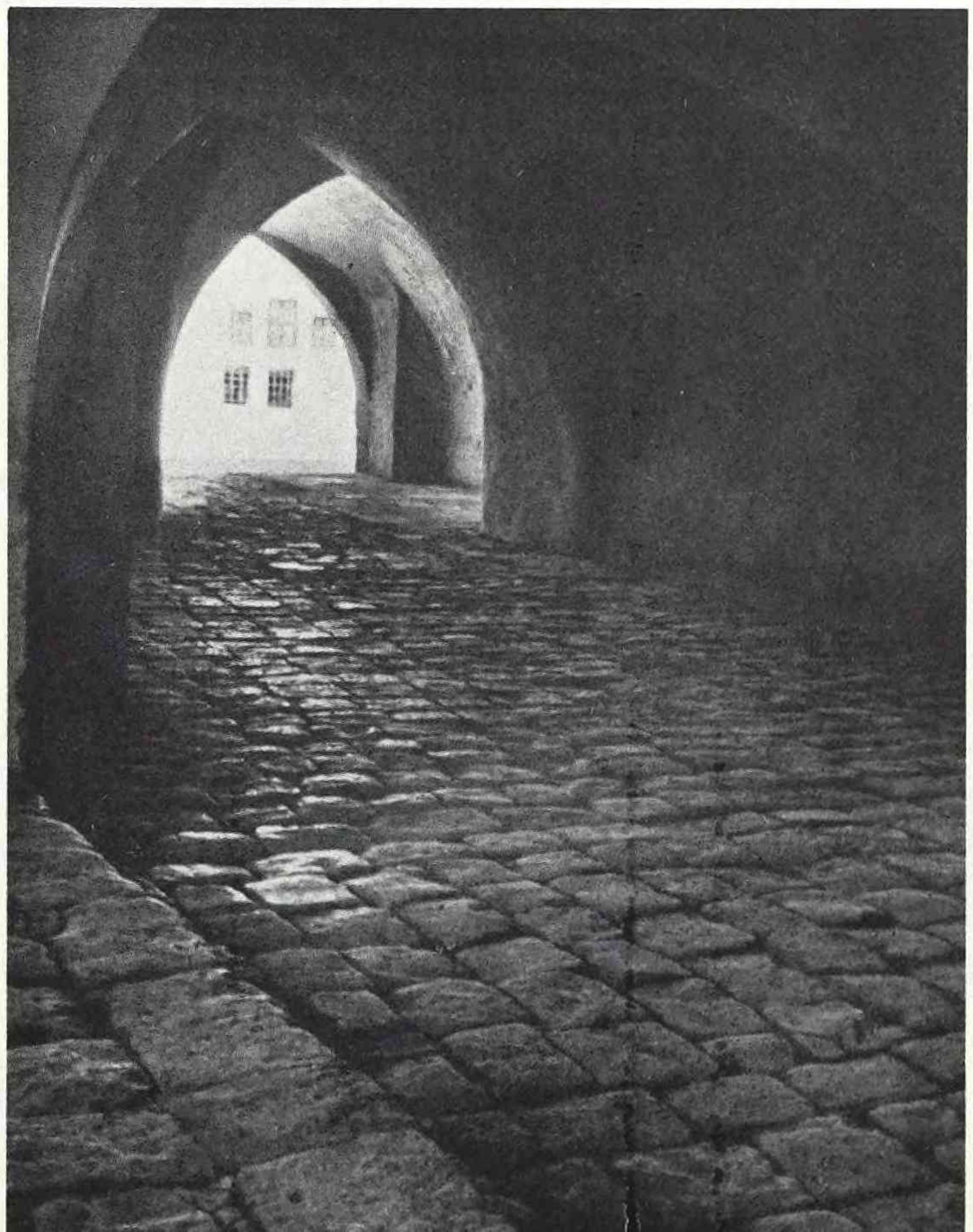
336[*a*]-337[*a*] Probably those situated on the west side, including the one the Romans had breached (see 304[*c*]).

338[*b*] *A near defeat of the Romans within the narrow lanes of Jerusalem* This area was the site of the wool market, the clothing market, and the shops of the coppersmiths. The upper part of the central valley (Tyropoeon) lay between the First and Second Walls (see map). This valley started in what is now known as the Damascus gate, and it always has been the commercial center of old Jerusalem, as it is today. During the Judaean Monarchy, the shops of the perfume-makers and goldsmiths were located there. In the days of the Second Temple, i.e. the Hasmonean and Herodian periods, it was the site of the wool market and the shops of the coppersmiths, as stated. The narrow lanes in the market quarter were cut obliquely by the Second Wall (which led from north to south); the fact that the Jewish defenders knew this quarter well helped them for a time to repulse the Romans who had made a narrow breach in the Second Wall and had begun to wander aimlessly in the market streets. A flanking attack from the "Upper Gates" (as stated in the text; perhaps the gates in the unguarded Third Wall) forced the Romans to retire to their camps west of the Second Wall. Indeed, the Romans would have suffered a major defeat had their archers not been able to shoot from that part of the Second Wall which they still occupied. This blundering onrush of the Romans into uncharted enemy territory (similar in many ways to Vespasian's near defeat in entering Jotapata or Gamla without studying the lay of the land) reveals a reverse process to modern strategy. We should note that in this passage, Josephus lists the markets as belonging to the area, which was filled with them at that time. It has remained a commercial center in Jerusalem in later times as well, namely the Forum and Cardo Maximus (main street) of the Roman colony, Aelia Capitolina, the bazaars of the Crusaders, and to this day it is the market quarter of the Old City.

339[*c*] Apparently the breach already mentioned in 304[*c*].

340[*d*] He was the tribune of the XVth legion who, with Titus, had first entered Jotapata. The author never fails to emphasize Titus' prowess.

The street in the Bezetha quarter lay a few feet below and probably conformed in some detail to its successor two millennia later



347[e] The northern stretch between the Third and Second Walls, including the Bezetha quarter, the Timber market, etc. After having again taken the Second Wall, he retained control of it permanently.
347[f] *Southern quarter* South of the Second Wall which had been breached.
347[g] *Third Wall* Meaning the First or "Old Wall" and the third in the course of the siege as seen by the attackers.
352[a] "Old Wall," namely the First, and so known to the Jews. See map.
356[a] The Roman legions which surrounded Jerusalem and occupied it in part, were the tenth, fifteenth, twelfth and seventh.
356[b] Cf. 259.
356[c] Locate the Antonia on the accompanying map of the siege.

The cavalry charges were led to the sound of rams' horns

because of their transgressions, and they saw neither the strength of the remaining Romans—who far outnumbered those who had been expelled—nor the famine that was stealthily moving towards them. (344) It was still possible for them to feed on the public miseries and to drink the city's life-blood, although honest people had long since suffered from want, and many were already dying from hunger. (345) But the partisans regarded the destruction of the people as a relief to themselves; for they held that the only people who deserved to survive were those who were enemies to peace and who chose to live only to resist the Romans; they rejoiced to see the masses of opponents waste away for they were an encumbrance. (346) Such was their attitude to those inside the walls; they held up the Romans, who were again trying to break in, by blocking the breach with their own bodies. For three days they stood their ground and resisted with determination; but on the fourth, they were unable to withstand a courageous onslaught delivered by Titus and were compelled to fall back to their former refuge. (347) Once more in possession of the wall, Titus immediately destroyed the whole northern stretch [e], placed garrisons in the towers in the southern quarter [f], and began to plan his assault on the Third Wall [g].

Chapter IX

1. The siege suspended for a time; the parade of the army before Jerusalem

(348) He now resolved to suspend the siege for a while and to afford the factions an interval for deliberation, in the hope that they would be inclined to surrender in view of the demolition of the Second Wall, or because of fear of famine, as the fruits of plunder would not keep them going for long. He also turned the period of inaction to his own advantage. (349) When the soldiers' payday arrived, he ordered his officers to parade the forces in full view of the enemy, and count out the money to each man. (350) The troops, in accordance with custom, removed the protective coverings from their armor and advanced, clad in mail, the horsemen leading the chargers which were richly caparisoned. (351) The area in front of the city shone far and wide with silver and gold; nothing filled the Romans more with delight and their enemies more with awe. (352) The whole Old Wall [a] and the north side of the Temple were crowded with spectators, and the houses behind the wall were packed with craning heads—no spot in the city was not covered by the crowd. (353) Utter consternation seized even the hardiest at the sight of this assemblage of all the forces, the splendor of their armor and the admirable order of the men; (354) and I have little doubt that the rebels would have been converted at this sight, had they not, because of the enormity of their crimes against the people, lost all hope of pardon by the Romans. (355)

But as death awaited them if they desisted now, they thought it far better to die in battle. Fate, too, ordained the involvement of both innocent and guilty in common ruin, and with the rebellion, the entire city.

2. Renewal of the siege; earthworks opposite the Antonia and John's tomb

(356) In four days the Romans completed the payment of all the legions [*a*]. On the fifth, since no overtures for peace came from the Jews, Titus combined his legions into two groups and began raising earthworks opposite the Antonia and the tomb of John [*b*] respectively; his plan was to invade the Upper Town at the latter point, and the Temple via the Antonia [*c*]; for unless the Temple was taken, his hold of the town would be precarious. (357) Accordingly, work on two banks at each of these two points was begun, one being assigned to each legion [*d*]. (358) The men working alongside the monument were hindered by the Idumaeans and the troops of Simon who sallied out against them; those before the Antonia suffered obstructions from John's followers and the Zealots. (359) Their adversaries had the advantage not only with hand-thrown missiles, due to the superiority of their high position, but also because they had by now learned to use their engines skillfully [*a*]; daily practice had bit by bit brought with it familiarity; they had three hundred quick-firers [*b*] and forty stone-throwers [*c*], enabling them seriously to retard the erection of the Roman earthworks. (360) Titus, realizing that the survival or destruction of the city vitally affected himself, did not omit to urge the Jews to reconsider their policy, while prosecuting the siege. (361) Combining operations with good advice and knowing that too often force is less effective than speech, he called on them repeatedly to save themselves by surrendering the city, which was already virtually almost taken; but he also delegated Josephus to parley with them in their native tongue, thinking they would perhaps yield to the exhortations of a fellow countryman.

3. Josephus' exhortation to the Jews to surrender

(362) Josephus, accordingly, circled the wall and, striving to keep out of range of missiles but within hearing, at different positions, appealed to them repeatedly to spare their country and their Temple, and not to show themselves more indifferent to their fate than were the aliens. (363) The Romans, he urged, though they had no share in them, yet respected the holy places [*d*] of their enemies, and until now had kept their hands off them; while those who had been brought up in them and—if they were kept safe from injury—would alone enjoy them, were actually bent on destruction. (364) In fact, they could see their strongest walls prostrate, and only one still standing, weaker than those taken [*e*]; they knew that the might of Rome was irresistible and that submission to her

357[*d*] The fifth and twelfth were assigned to the Antonia; the tenth and fifteenth attacked near John's monument. See also 260[*b*].
359[*a*] Cf. 267 (Cestius Gallus' defeat).
359[*b*] Quick-firers, called *scorpions*.
359[*c*] Stone-throwers or *ballistae*.
363[*d*] *Holy places* The term incorporates also rites and taboos, in addition to the sanctuaries.
364[*e*] He tried to weaken the stubborn resistance by arguing that the "Old Wall" (First Wall) which remained in Jewish hands was weaker than the other two—even though this was contrary to fact.
365[*f*] *From the start* Namely at the early stages of Roman domination. Cf. 395 ff. below.

A stone table and ware excavated in the Upper City

was no new experience for themselves. (365) If indeed it was noble to fight for freedom, they should have done so at the start [*f*]. Since they had succumbed and submitted for so long, to try to shake off the yoke was the action of men courting death, not of lovers of freedom [*g*]. (366) It might be legitimate to scorn meaner masters, but not the lords of the whole world. For what spot on earth had escaped the Romans, unless heat or cold made it useless for them? (367) Fortune, indeed, had passed over to them from every side, and God, who moved from nation to nation handing them empire, now rested over Italy. It was an immutable law among animals and men alike that all must submit to the stronger, and that mastery belonged to those supreme in arms. (368) That is why their ancestors, far superior to themselves in soul and body and in resources to boot, had yielded to the Romans—a thing they would not have tolerated if they had not known that God was on the Roman side. (369) As for themselves, how could they expect to hold out, when the main part of the city had already been captured, and those inside, even if their walls were still standing, were worse off than if the city had been taken? (370) The Romans were well aware of the famine raging in the city, which was now consuming the general populace and would soon destroy the combatants as well.

The hopelessness of fighting famine

(371) Even if the Romans would suspend the siege and make no armed assault on the city, yet there was a war within which could not be fought and was gaining strength every hour, unless they could take arms and fight against famine itself and, alone among men, master even the pangs of hunger [*a*]. (372) They had better repent, he went on, before irretrievable disaster befell them and switch to safer counsels while they had the opportunity. The Romans would bear them no grudge for the past, unless they would remain stubborn to the end; they were by nature merciful in victory [*b*], and would put considerations of expedience above vindictiveness; they did not wish to have on their hands an uninhabited city or a devastated country. (373) That was why Caesar, even now, was ready to offer them guarantees; but if he took the city by storm, he would not spare a single man, especially after the rejection of offers made to them in extremity. (374) That the Third Wall would be quickly captured was vouched for by the fall of the other two, and even if that barrier defied attack, the famine would fight for the Romans.

4. Learning from ancient history

(375) Josephus' exhortations were received by many of the defenders on the ramparts with derision or execration, and by some he was attacked with showers of missiles. As his direct advice did not move them, he turned to reminiscences of national [*a*] history. (376) "You wretched people," he cried, "forgetful of your own true allies, are you waging war on Rome with

365[*g*] Josephus repeats here and in the sequel of his exhortation similar arguments he had put into the mouth of King Agrippa II at the opening of the War (III, 355 ff.). In this respect, at least, he appeared to be consistent with his beliefs as a pragmatist and pacifist, now that the turn of events had changed his fate and the continuation of resistance to the Roman colossus seemed a hopeless gamble.

371[*a*] The famine was equally one of the Roman's greatest assets in trying to break down Jewish resistance.

372[*b*] *The vaunted "Roman mercy"* These were Nicanor's very words to Josephus when he surrendered at Jotapata (III, 347); they echo a classic quotation from Virgil's *"parcere devictis"* in Aeneid VI, 853, probably familiar to the author. Whether the Romans would be merciful in victory was a moot point, and, at this juncture, Josephus in his eagerness to mollify his countrymen, had taken a lot for granted as regards Roman magnanimity, as will be seen in the commentary to para. 422 below.

375[*a*] *Josephus' "stories of old" and their import* By dint of these stories, patterned in a way after the moral of Psalms 78, 1-3, 105, 5 ff, 106, 7 ff, which extoll God's mercy to his people, Josephus tried to prove on theological grounds that the insurgents had no justification for arrogating the right to endanger the holy city. Such classic "signs" and omens were well taken as a rule. The Hasmonean leaders are said to have addressed a similar message to their followers (I Mac. 21, etc.; II Mac. VIII, 22). Josephus did not hestitate to reinforce the historical lessons and, to lend them conviction, he resorted to prophetic exhortations, going as far as to compare his case with that of Jeremiah (cf. paras. 391, 392) who prayed for the welfare of Jerusalem; even King Zedekiah, though he paid for his sins (cf. 391[*e*]), was not as evil as the present rebels of Jerusalem, people who would silence him. The burden of this speech, even more than Agrippa's address to the people of Jerusalem, is that Israel's strength resides in its powers of endurance, not in violence. His attitude to Rome was also concomitant with the Pharisaic ideology as well as with that of most Diaspora Jews. Its protagonists' voices had been stilled since the outbreak of the revolution.

378[*b*] *Your forefathers* He made bold to impress the insurgents—Zealots and Jerusalemites alike—although they regarded him as a renegade, with his conviction, as a scholar and priest, that Jews had no right under any circumstances to endanger the holy city, as it was God's domain. This was, of course, a major point of contention at the time.

379[*c*] *Nechaos* As they interpreted Scriptures, Jews were wont to resort to Jewish legends (defined as *Aggadah* or *Haggadah*). Historical *Haggadah* incorporates additions to the Scriptural writings. Josephus may have derived his story from a current *Haggadah* on Genesis 12, 10-20 (and a variant in 20, 1 ff). The Bible relates that Abraham had gone down to Egypt, while this Haggadah adds that Pharaoh invaded Canaan. In any case, the Nechaos (Necho) in question was the name of the Pharaoh who subdued King Josiah many centuries later (II Chron. 35, 20). No king by this name is known in Patriarchal times.

arms and your own might of hand? (377) What other foe have we defeated in that way? And when did God, the Creator, fail to avenge the Jews, if they were wronged? Will you not turn around and look at the place whence you are setting forth to fight and think how powerful an ally you have outraged? (378) Will you not recall the miraculous exploits of your forefathers [*b*] and what mighty wars this holy place has won for us in days of old? For myself, I shudder to recall the works of God to unworthy ears [*b*]; but listen all the same so that you may realize that you are fighting not only the Romans but God as well [*b*].

Pharaoh Necho (Nechaos) and Sara

(379) "Nechaos [*c*], also called Pharaoh, the king of Egypt at the time, descended with an immense army and carried off Sara [*d*], a princess, and the mother of our race; (380) and what did her husband, our ancestor, do? Did he avenge himself on the ravisher by force of arms? Yet he had three hundred and eighteen officers under him [*a*], each in command of unlimited manpower! Did he not regard them as valueless without the aid of God, and, stretching out pure hands [*b*] towards this spot which you have now desecrated, enlist the invincible Ally on his side? (381) And was not the queen sent back to her husband, after one night's absence, untouched, while the Egyptian, in awe of the place stained by your countrymen's blood [*a*] and shaken by his visions of the night, fled, bestowing silver and gold [*b*] upon those Hebrews beloved of God [*c*]. (382) Need I speak of our fathers' sojourn in Egypt? Tyrannized and subjected to foreign rule for four hundred years [*d*], yet, though they might have resisted with weapons and violence, did they not commit themselves to God? (383) Who has not heard of Egypt, overrun with every wild beast and wasted by every disease, of the barren land, the failing Nile, the ten plagues in succession, and the consequent departure of our fathers under escort [*e*], without bloodshed, without danger, conducted by God as the future guardians of his shrine? (384) Or again did not Philistia and the idol Dagon rue the rape of our sacred Ark by the Syrians [*f*]? Did not the whole nation of those who had stolen it rue that day, their hidden parts suppurating, (385) their bowels prolapsing along with their food [*g*] until they restored it with the hands which stole it, to the sound of cymbals and timbrels [*h*], and with expiations of every kind propitiating the sanctuary? (386) It was God's leadership that won the triumphs of our fathers, because, instead of using their hands or weapons, they committed to him the decision of the issue. (387) When Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, with all Asia [*a*] in his train, encamped around the city [*b*], did he fall by human hands? (388) Were not those hands unarmed and raised in supplication, while God's anger in one night destroyed that innumerable army, so that when the Assyrian arose next morning he found 185,000 corpses, and fled with the survivors from the

379[*d*] Sara in Hebrew means "princess."

380[*a*] Alluding to Abraham's 318 henchmen whom he led in a war against four invading "kings" in order to rescue Lot, as related in *Gen.* 14.

380[*b*] *"Stretching out pure hands"*—or *healing hands* Contemporary evidence of curing by the laying of "pure hands" is mentioned in the *Genesis Apocryphon* Scroll found at Qumran (p. 20, verses 16-17, Jerusalem): Pharaoh and his household were afflicted by a dire disease and he could not come near Sara. When all his doctors and magicians could not cure him, he sent for Abraham and asked him to pray for the king and lay his hands on him so that he might live. When Sara was restored to him he prayed and laid his hands on her head, whereupon the evil spirit left the king and he lived. Josephus alludes in *War* II, 136 and 159, as well as in *Antiquities* XV, 117, to the Essenes' learning and unusual healing powers which derived from their purity, inspiration, and arcane knowledge.

381[*a*] *"Stained... your countrymen's blood"* Josephus contends (cf. 378[*b*]) that Jews had committed an irrevocable sin in endangering the future and security of the holy city.

381[*b*] *Silver and gold* No gifts from Pharaoh are recorded in the first story in Gen. 12, 20; in a parallel story in 20, 14-16 King Abimelech, in similar circumstances, bestowed gifts upon Abraham.

381[*c*] *"Beloved of God"* This qualification had special significance in Jewish theology, and in Muhammad's beliefs as well. In Islamic dogma, Abraham is equally the "beloved of God." Consequently, the holy town of Abraham, namely, Hebron, is also called *"khālīl"* (beloved or friend in Arabic).

382[*d*] *"Four hundred years"* This is a traditional round figure quoted in Gen. 15, 13 (and is thus followed in *Antiq.* II, 204 and in Acts 7, 6). However, Exodus 12, 40 specifies a more precise period of 430 years for Israel's bondage in Egypt.

383[*e*] This saying is parallel to the Apocryphal "Wisdom of Solomon" in its comparison of the Egyptians and the Israelites. It concludes by saying that nature punishes the wicked and rewards the pious, and the moral is that the Egyptians speeded the Israelites on their way.

384[*f*] I Sam. 5-6 The "Syrians" in question are the Philistines.

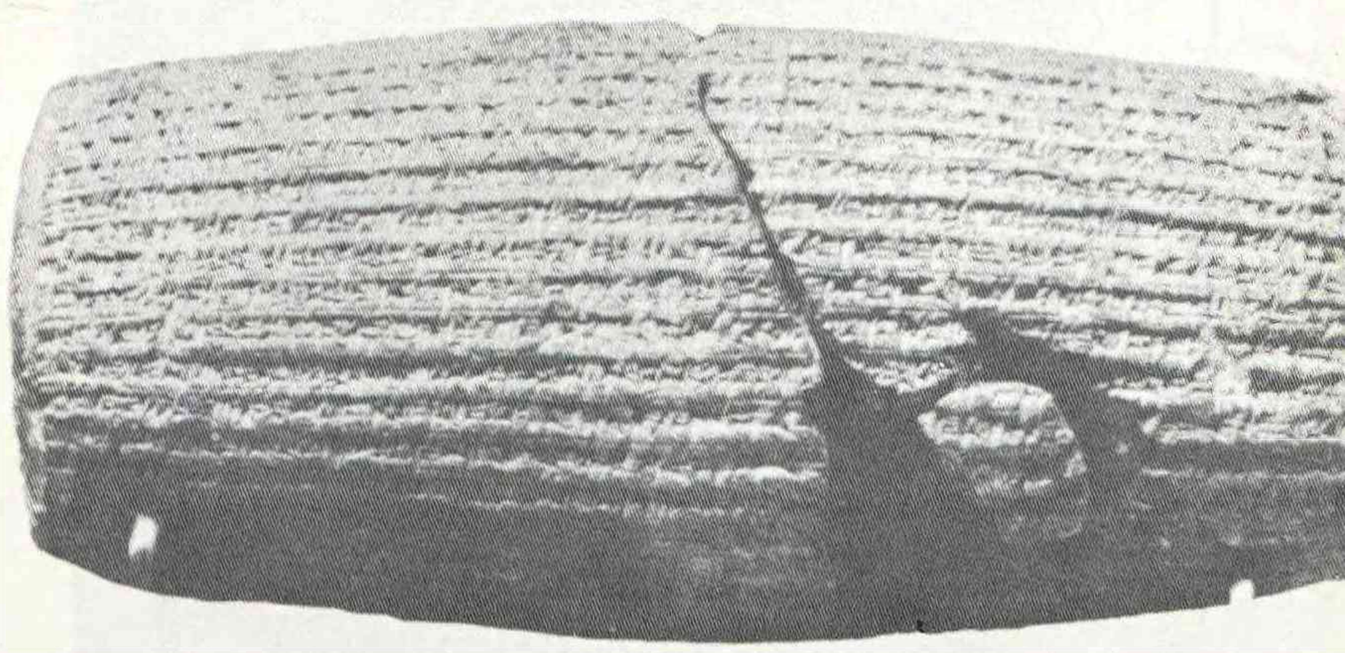
385[*g*] A rhetorical amplification of the story in I Sam. 4-5.

385[*h*] Embroidering, as was his wont, on the biblical story.

387[*a*] Western Asia was then in the power of Assyria.

387[*b*] Cf. V. 303 a.

Clay cylinder of Cyrus (538 BC) King of Persia, sanctioning the return of Jews to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of their Temple (Ezra 1, 23)



388[*c*] II Kings 19, 35 "That night the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrian troops..."

389[*d*] Cf. Ezra 1, 1-4. The restoration of Israel as a nation is illustrated in Cyrus' historic cylinder granting permission to the exiles of Judah to return to their land.

391[*e*] King Zedekiah had been blinded and taken prisoner to Babylonia; he did not "see" the destruction of his state.

392[*f*] Jerem. 27, 12 ff. "If you want to live, submit to the king of Babylon."

394[*a*] The correct historical record of Antiochus Epiphanes is given in the initial comments of *War* I.

394[*b*] Cf. 394[*a*]. Some believe the event is also referred to in the enigmatic terms of Daniel 12, 11—a, 1,290 days. I *Mac.* 54 and 4, 52, reckons the three-year period to December, 165 BC.

395[*c*] *Sinfulness* is too strong a term to apply to the freedom-loving Jews of the Hasmonean period.

396[*d*] Cf. Pompey's policy in Judaea, *War* I, 131 ff.

397[*e*] Cf. *War* I, 149; *Antiquities* XIV, 66.

397[*f*] Josephus' accusation that Jews had forsaken their "laws" at the time is certainly out of place. The religious rites were maintained at the Temple to the bitter end. He may have referred to hellenization secular laws.

398[*a*] *War* I, 345; *Antiquities* XIV, 468.

398[*b*] *War* I, 351 states five months, while *Antiquities* XIV, 476 states two months, with the two walls captured in 40 and 15 days respectively.

401[*c*] The "lawgiver" is Moses.

402[*d*] *More speedily defeated* than in previous sieges applies, apparently, to the length of the war with Rome as a whole, not to the time at which these words were spoken, barely two months after the beginning of the siege.

402[*e*] *"Reverenced from a distance"* Gentiles did not cross the balustrade or *"soreg"* of the outer court of the Gentiles. Cf. V. 193.

The amphora is a large clay container (30-40 liters) equipped with two handles. Watering fields with amphoras (mentioned in 410[*e*]) would prove too slow and backbreaking

Hebrews who were neither armed nor pursuing? [*c*] (389) You know, too, of the bondage in Babylon where our people lived in exile for seventy years and rose to gain their liberty, until Cyrus granted it to them in gratitude to God [*d*]; yes, it was through him that they were sent forth to reestablish worship of their Ally. (390) In short, on no occasion did our fathers succeed by force, or fail without it, when they committed their cause to God: if they remained calm they conquered, as it seemed good to their Judge; if they fought they were invariably defeated. (391) For instance, when the king of Babylon was besieging the city, and our King Zedekiah, disregarding Jeremiah's prophetic warnings, gave him battle, he was himself taken prisoner and saw the town and the Temple razed to the ground [*e*]. Yet, how much more moderate than your leaders was that king, and his subjects than you! (392) For although Jeremiah loudly proclaimed that they were hateful to God for their transgressions against Him, and would be taken into captivity unless they surrendered the city, neither the king nor the people put him to death [*f*]. (393) But you—I will say nothing of scenes in the city, for I have no words adequate to describe your atrocities—you, I deplore, assail me with abuse and missiles when I exhort you to save yourselves, enraged at being reminded of your sins and unable to endure any mention of the crimes you have actually perpetrated day after day! (394) Or again, when our ancestors advanced in arms against Antiochus [*a*] surnamed Epiphanes, who was blockading the city and had committed gross sacrilege, they were slaughtered in the battle, the town was plundered by the enemy, and the sanctuary was desolate for three years and six months [*b*].

Lessons of more recent history

(395) "Need I mention more? But do tell me, who enlisted the Romans against our country? Was not the sinfulness [*c*] of its inhabitants responsible? (396) Whence did our servitude arise? Was it not due to party strife among our forefathers, when the mad rivalry of Aristobulus and Hyrcanus and their mutual discord brought Pompey against the city [*d*] and God trust under the Romans those who did not deserve to be free? (397) After three months' siege [*e*] they surrendered, though they were innocent of such offenses as yours against the sanctuary, and against the laws [*f*]—while they possessed far ampler resources for war. (398) And do we not know the fate of Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus [*a*], in whose reign God again smote the people for their offenses by a further capture of the city? When Herod, the son of Antipater, brought upon us Sossius and Sossius brought upon us the Roman army, they blockaded and besieged them for six months [*b*], till as a punishment for their sins they were captured and the city plundered by their enemies? (399) Thus arms have never been given to our nation, and war invariably ended in defeat. (400)

For it is the duty, I believe, of those who dwell on holy ground to commit all things to the judgment of God, and to scorn the aid of human hands it they can only conciliate the heavenly Arbiter. (401) As for you, what have you done that is blessed by the Lawgiver? [*c*] And which of the things cursed by him have you left undone?

Their fatal enormities

(402) How much more impious are you than those who have been more speedily defeated in past years? [*d*] You have not disdained secret sins—thefts, treacheries, adultery—while you vie with each other in plundering and murder, opening new and unheard of paths of vice; indeed, the Temple has become a sink for the nation's dregs, and native hands have polluted the hallowed spot that even Romans reverenced from a distance [*e*], setting aside many customs of their own in deference to your law. (403) And do you expect after all this, do you expect Him, whom you have thus outraged, to be your ally? You are indeed righteous suppliants, and it is with clean hands that you beseech your protector! (404) With such hands, no doubt, our king sought aid against the Assyrians [*f*] when in one night that mighty army was struck down by God! Are the Romans behaving so like the Assyrians that you may look for a like vengeance yourselves? (405) Did he not receive money from our king [*g*] on the understanding that he would not sack the city, and then come down on us, in violation of his oaths, to burn the sanctuary, whereas the Romans are only demanding the customary tribute, which our fathers paid to theirs? (406) Once they obtain this, they will neither sack the city nor lay a finger on your holy things, but will grant you everything else: the freedom of your families [*h*], the security of your possessions, and the preservation of your sacred laws. (407) It is plain madness to expect God to treat the just as he treats the unjust! Moreover, He can inflict immediate vengeance, when there is need, as when He crushed the Assyrians on the very first night they encamped near the city [*a*]; (408) so if he had judged our generation worthy of freedom or the Romans of chastisement, He would immediately have visited them—as He fell upon the Assyrians—when Pompey meddled with our affairs, when later Sossius came up, when Vespasian ravaged Galilee, and, last of all now, when Titus was approaching the city. (409) And yet Magnus [*b*] and Sossius, far from sustaining any setback, took the city by storm; Vespasian, as a result of his war against us, mounted the throne [*c*]; while for Titus, as you know, the springs flow more copiously, the very spring which had dried up for you. (410) Before his coming, as you know, Siloam [*d*] and all the springs outside the town were failing, so that water had to be brought by the *amphora* [*e*]; whereas now they flow so freely for your enemies as to suffice not only for themselves and their beasts, but even for gardens [*f*]. (411) The same miracle you saw happen

404[*f*] Sennacherib (Cf. V. 303, 387).
405[*g*] King Hezekiah's tribute (II Kings 14, 14 ff).
406[*h*] *"The freedom of your families"* Josephus may have spoken in this vein as a diplomatic representative of the Romans; but he erred on historical grounds, as will be gathered from comment 303[*a*] above.
407[*a*] II Kings 19, 35: "That night the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrians..." (See note 303[*a*]).
409[*b*] *"Magnus"* Pompey the "Great."
409[*c*] Cf. *War* IV 604. Vespasian hailed as emperor.
410[*d*] *Siloam,* namely, the Pool of Siloam which derives its waters from the Gihon spring (as illustrated). The flow of the spring is known to recede at times, especially more so after a year of drought. Josephus, as explained in 146[*d*] thought the Pool of Siloam was the actual *spring* and not the outlet of the Gihon spring. A water shortage he refers to may have been caused by a drought-year which affected the spring's supply.
410[*e*] *Amphora*—a Roman measure of about 9 gallons.
410[*f*] The gardens in question are easily identifiable to this day. They are the verdant vegetable gardens and fruit orchards maintained by the Arab villagers of Siloam, as illustrated, and irrigated by the overflow of the Pool of Siloam (410[*d*]), known in biblical times as the king's gardens.
411[*g*] The Babylonians who are mentioned in para. 391; but the "miracle" in his day is not mentioned in Scriptures except the former Assyrian disaster (II Kings 19, 35).

The King's Gardens, situated in the watered section of the Kidron valley (and by an outflow of the Pool of Siloam), have flourished uninterruptedly during the last four millennia

412[*a*] Josephus patterned his peroration on the prophet Jeremiah as he expressed God's wrath; it is hardly likely that he meant it literally at this point.

416[*b*] *"Hard-hearted men"* is an epithet often used by Jeremiah (7, 24; 9, 13).

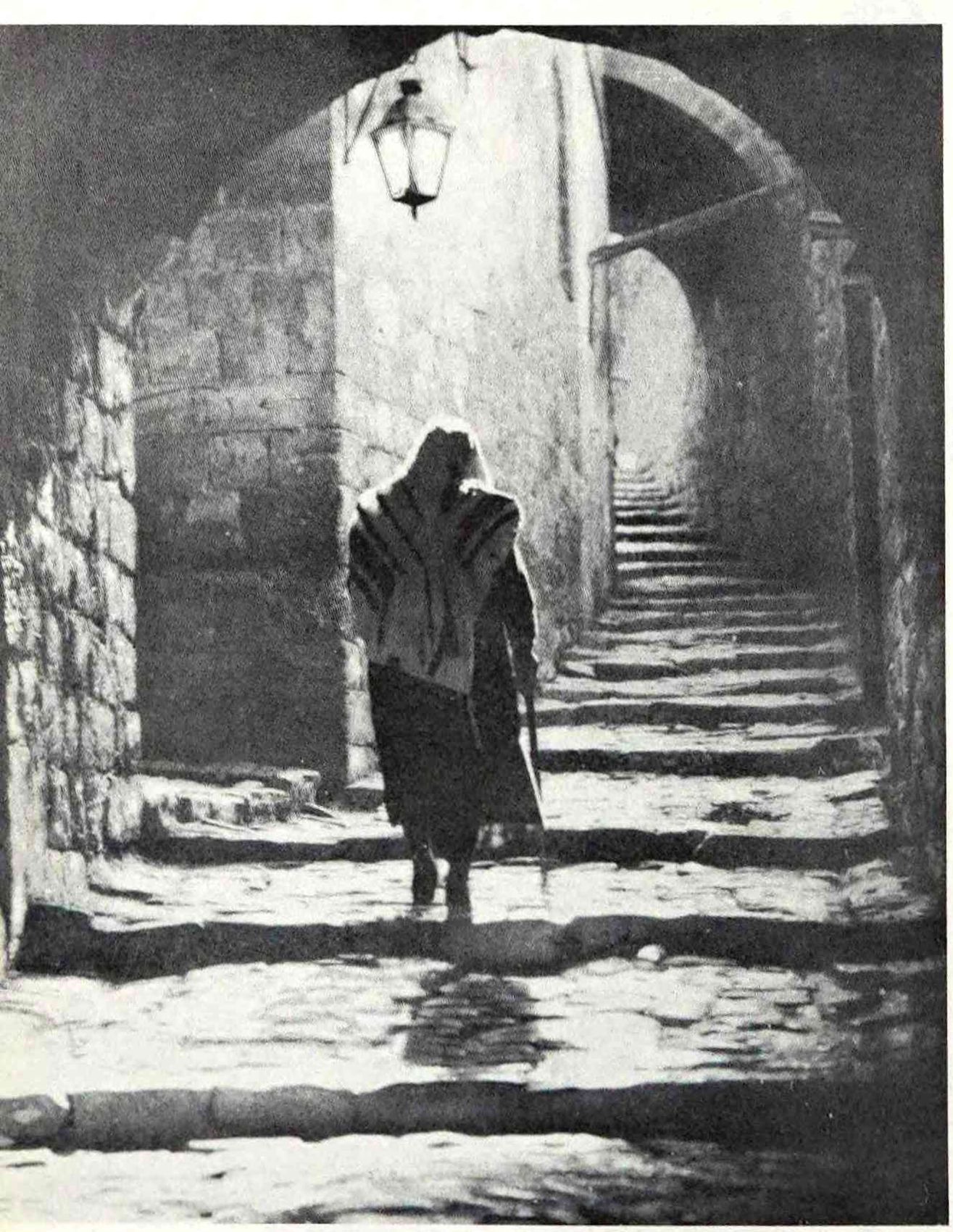
419[*c*] *"A mother"* His father Matthias was still alive and his father detained in prison (533). Near to its close Josephus' oration plays on human emotions.

419[*d*] Josephus ends on a note of pathos.

421[*a*] The sequel to this story of horror is described in 550 ff.

once before at the capture of the city, when the Babylonians whom I have mentioned [*g*] marched against it, captured and burnt both the city and the sanctuary, (412) although the Jews of that generation, I imagine, were surely guilty of no such impiety as yours. So I believe that the Deity has fled from the holy places and stands now on the side of those with whom you are at war [*a*]. (413) Why, when an honorable man will fly from a wanton home and abhor its inmates, do you think that God still remains with this household in its iniquity—God who sees each hidden thing and hears what is wrapped in silence? (414) And what do you wrap in silence or keep hidden? Nay, what was not made clear even to your enemies? For you parade your enormities and daily vie with each other as to who shall be the worst, making an exhibition of vices as if they were virtues! (415) Yet, in spite of it all, a way of salvation is still left to you if you will follow it, and the Deity is easily reconciled to those who confess and repent. (416) Oh! you hard-hearted men [*b*], throw away your weapons, take pity on your country, at this moment tottering to its fall, turn around and gaze at the beauty of what you are betraying: what a city! what a Temple! (417) how many nations' gifts. Would any man direct the flames against these? Are there any who wish these things to exist no more? What could be more worthy of salvation than these, you inhuman creatures, you stone-hearted men! (418) Yet if you do not look on these with the eyes of affection, at least pity your families, and let each man set before his eyes his children, wife and parents, so soon to perish by famine or by war. (419) I know that I have a mother [*c*], a wife, a family of good birth and an ancient and illustrious house involved in these perils; and perhaps you think it is for their sake I am offering you advice. Kill them, take my blood as the price of your own salvation! I too am ready to die, if that will lead you to learn wisdom!"[*d*].

The narrow alleys of that time lie a few meters below the present alleys of the Old City and bear a close resemblance to them



E. THE HORRORS OF THE SIEGE

Chapter X

1. The Jews who deserted to Titus

(420) Yet, though Josephus shouted in tears to the insurgents, they neither yielded nor deemed it safe to alter their course. (421) The people, however, were stimulated to desert; some sold all their possessions for a trifle, some their whole property, others their most valuable treasures. To prevent discovery by the brigands, they would swallow the gold coins [*a*], and, deserting to the Romans, had only to empty their bowels to have ample provision for their needs. (422) Most of them were allowed by Titus to go through into the countryside in any direction they chose [*b*]; this made them still more ready to desert, as they would thus escape the misery of the city without being enslaved by the Romans. (423) The partisans of John

and Simon, however, kept a sharp lookout, more to keep these men from leaving than to keep the Romans out, and anyone who afforded even a shadow of a doubt as to loyalty was instantly put to death.

2. The house-to-house search

(424) For the wealthy, however, it was just as fatal to remain in the city; for on the pretext that he was a deserter many a man was killed for the sake of his property. As the famine grew worse, the frenzy of the insurgents kept pace with it, and every day both these horrors burned more fiercely [*a*]. (425) For, since nowhere was grain to be seen, men would break into houses, and if they found some they mistreated the occupants for having denied their possession of it; if they found none, they tortured them as if they had concealed it more carefully [*a*]. (426) Proof whether they had food or not was provided by the physical appearance of the wretches; those still in good condition were deemed to be well provided with food, while those who were already wasting away were passed over, for it seemed pointless to kill persons who would soon die of starvation. (427) Many secretly bartered their possessions for a single measure of wheat, if they happened to be rich, barley if they were poor. Then they shut themselves up in the darkest corners of their houses; in the extremity of hunger some even ate their grain unground, while others baked it, guided by necessity and fear. (428) Nowhere was a table laid—the food was snatched half-cooked from the fire and torn into pieces.

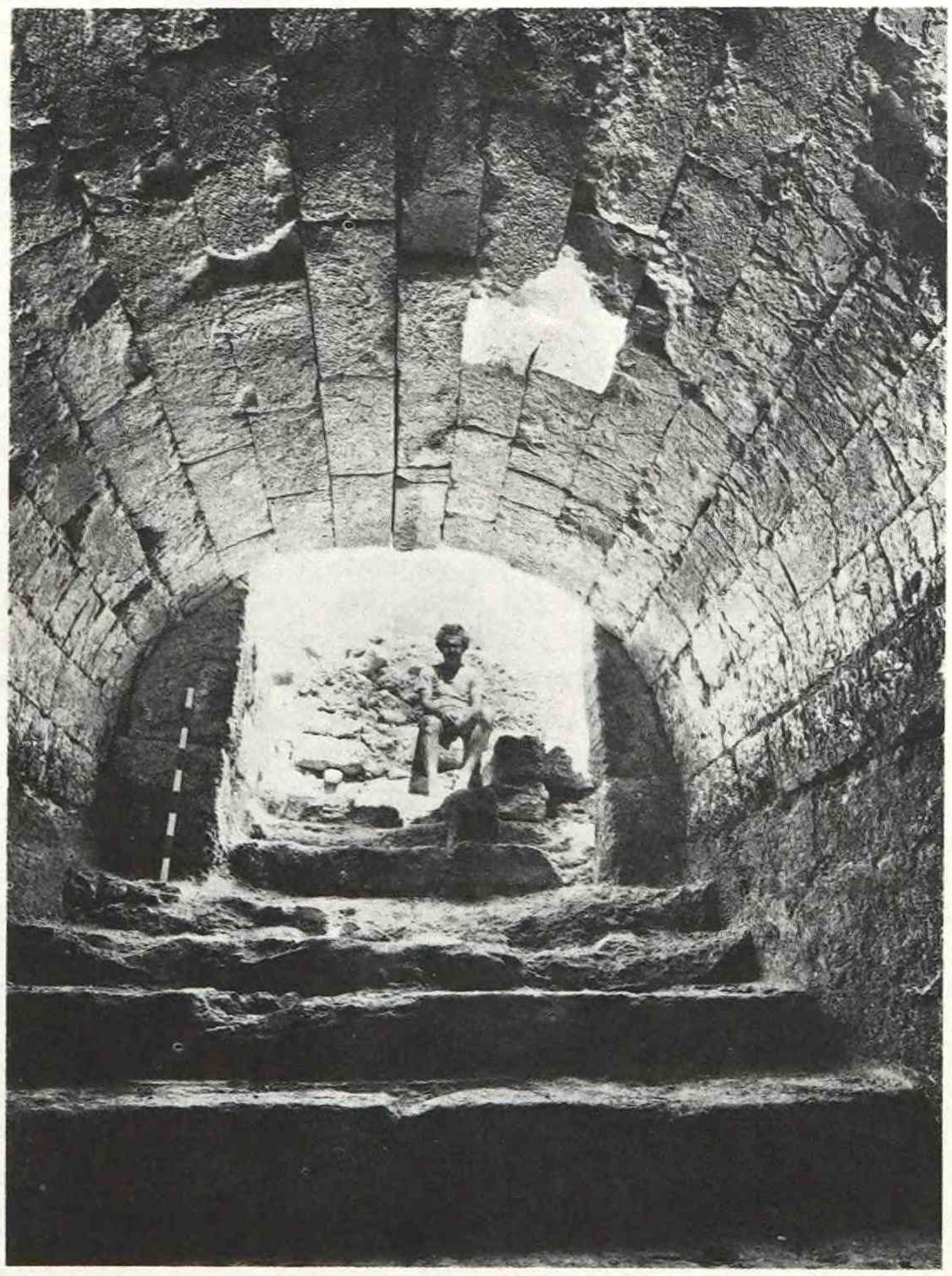
3. The horrors of famine and atrocities of the rebels

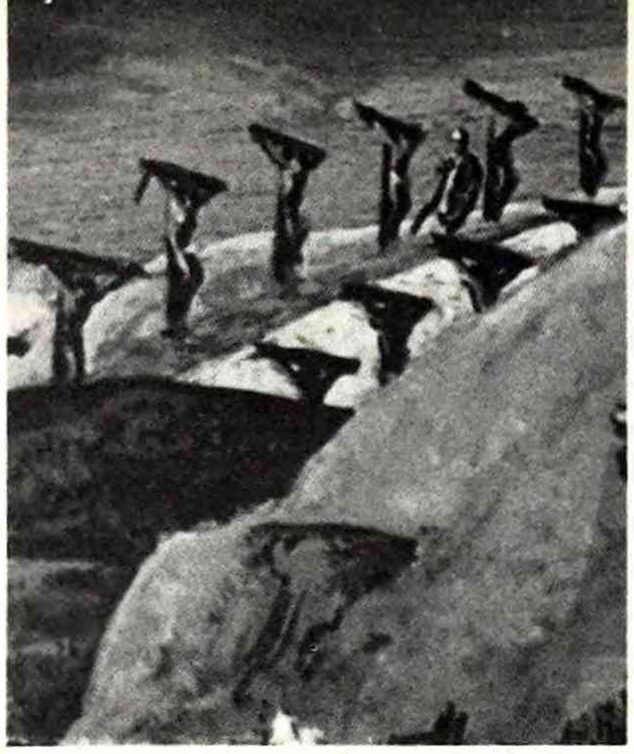
(429) Pitiful was the fare and worthy of tears the spectacle, for while the strong had more than enough, the weak could only whimper. All human emotions yield to hunger, but of nothing is it so destructive as of shame; what at other times would claim respect is, in the time of famine, treated with contempt. (430) Thus it was that wives snatched food from their husbands, children from fathers, and—most pitiful of all—mothers out of the very mouths of their infants; while their dearest ones were dying in their arms, they did not hesitate to deprive them of the life-giving morsels. (431) But this way of satisfying their hunger did not go unnoticed; everywhere the rebels hovered, ready to snatch away even these pickings. (432) Wherever they saw a house with locked doors, they concluded that those within were taking food, and instantly bursting the doors open, they rushed in and, forcing the bits of food out of their very jaws, brought them up again! (433) They beat old men who were clutching their victuals, they dragged women by their hair as they concealed what was in their hands; they had no pity for gray hairs or infants, but picked them up as they clung to their scraps and dashed them to the ground. (434) If anyone anticipated their entry by gulping down what they hoped to seize, they were even more savage as if they were defrauded. (435) One would

422[*b*] *The fate of destitute deserters; the author's qualification* "Any direction they chose," which can also be translated: He, Titus, apparently permitted each one to choose whatever dwelling-place he wished. It follows, according to G. Alon's reasoned thesis, backed by contemporary evidence, that others, who had no choice, were enslaved. *War*, III, 307-315, relates on another occasion, that Samaritans driven by thirst had deserted to the Romans and were surrounded by Cerealis' men on Mt. Gerizim "and many fled to the Romans, preferring a life of bondage to such a death." Thus desertion generally resulted in being sold into slavery, or being slain in groups. "Hence, wherever one meets with Roman "benevolence" one also uncovers their brutality. The ruthlessness of these acts, which despite Josephus' efforts to gloss over them as far as possible, is not diminished by the fact that occasionally the Romans used to spare the lives of the fugitives, or even to set them free, for it appears that they performed these acts of grace primarily where they hoped to influence thereby those who were left in the camp and induce them to go over to them." *(Jews, Judaism and the Classical World,* p. 282). This again is borne out by Josephus' statement in V, 348, that Titus halted his siege for a few days so as to give the insurgents time to reconsider their position and agree to surrender; then he adds in paras. 355-356 that the rebels did not submit because they realized they would die a vile death if they surrendered to the Romans, and considered it far better to die in battle. The same was true of Vespasian's encounters with the Jews of Galilee. That their fears were justified is proved by the gentile writers Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dio Cassius who, in referring to Rome's war in Palestine, make no mention of the rebels or the Zealots (in contradistinction to the rest of the people) and speak only of "Jews" and Jewish people who are at war with Rome. "Apparently their approach expresses the viewpoint of the Caesars who did not wish to differentiate their efforts against the people as a whole" (*ibid.*, p. 289).

424-425[*a*] The grim tale of horror and famine—told with sincere and deep feeling—is a living witness to Josephus' outstanding descriptive powers. Also described in *Abbot de Rabbi Nathan,* 86.

A stepped ritual bath (mikveh) *in the Upper City*





A mass-crucification scene (see par. 449, p. 389)

438[*b*] *The sacred name of God* Possibly referring to the Hebrew Tetragrammaton YHWH *(Shem Meforash)* never pronounced outright by Jews apparently since the 2nd century BC, except by the high priest on the Day of Atonement. It was read *Adonāi* (Lord) by Jews, or *Ha-Shēm* (i.e. the Name).

443[*c*] *Thus treated strangers*—probably meaning that they tried to justify their behavior to fellow-Jews whom they regarded as utter strangers to themselves. (The author does not comment on this expression, either at this juncture or elsewhere, but he may have thus pointedly qualified Simon-bar-Giora, as well as the Idumaeans. He does not state explicitly at a later date that the Idumaeans denied their Jewish descent when they fell into Roman hands; the riddle remains though it reflects Josephus' utter execration of the "scum" he refers to.)

445[*d*] Cf. *War* VI, 250-280 ff describing the ultimate tragedy and burning of the Temple.

449[*a*]-450[*b*] *"Sue for* (Roman) *mercy"* Cf. comment 422 [*b*] above. "Now the author offers three explanations of the massacres perpetrated by the Romans. First, that the Jews defended themselves, and hence were rightly to be treated as fighters. Secondly, it was impossible to incarcerate such a vast multitude. Finally, Titus wished to give the men of Jerusalem 'decisive proof' of what was in store for them from his mailed fist. But it is obvious that the first reason was a deliberate libel (just as the second was fatuous). For Josephus himself testifies that those who went outside the city wall wanted nothing better than to desert to the Romans. Why therefore did they see fit to slay these deserters who were ready to be captured by them? (Although he states that they were afraid to desert out of fear that their families would be punished, their real concern was that they should not be killed for leaving with the intention of deserting. But now, after being taken by force, they would not be suspected of this. Why then did they jeopardize themselves in vain?). Furthermore, the greater part (indeed, all of them, it seems) did not belong to the fighters, but were utterly destitute. How then could they fight against their embattled foes, seeing that they had no weapons? We must therefore conclude that these hapless people who had never taken part in the war left the city to save their lives, and they were not all concerned if they were captured by the Romans. It also proves that they left the city primarily with a view to surrendering. This is evidenced by the fact that subsequently—at the beginning of para. 453, Josephus forgets his main contention and relates that the Zealots dragged the relatives of the *deserters,* etc. He thus testifies, unwittingly, that they had left with the intention of surrendering to the Romans. However, since they were poverty-stricken (and 'valueless' as such), Titus treated them in accordance with the strict letter of the law, and put them to death with every conceivable atrocity. This is proved, if further proof is necessary, by Josephus' subsequent statement that the Zealots fetched the relatives to show them that... those who were crucified were not captives of war, but 'had sought refuge,' and thus many who had contemplated going over to the Romans were deterred from doing what they had at first intended... Hence the relatives of those executed had no doubt that those who went before them were not 'war captives'... For the Roman practice of massacring the people of the towns and villages who had no wish whatever to fight against them, and of slaying entire populations that had contained some rebels, although they had left without a struggle, was *of the same type*... This was the course adopted by Cestius Gallus, Vespasian, and Titus (and their henchmen) without distinction" (G. Alon, *ibid.,* pp. 285–288).

shudder hearing of the methods of torture they devised in their search for food; they blocked with vetch the orifices in their poor victims' bodies and drove sharp stakes up their posteriors; they inflicted on people torments untold to make them admit possession of a loaf or reveal the hiding-place of a handful of barley-meal. (436) It was not that the tormentors were hungry—their actions would have been less barbarous had they sprung from necessity, but they were keeping their reckless passions exercised and providing supplies for themselves to use in the coming days. (437) Again, when men had crawled out at night as far as the Roman outposts to gather wild herbs and grasses, they would go to meet them and, just at the moment these thought they were safely away from the enemy lines, they would snatch from them what they had procured; (438) and often though their victims implored them, appealing even in the sacred name of God [*b*] to let them have even a fraction of what they had collected at their own risk, not a morsel was given back; they were lucky if they were merely robbed and not killed as well.

4. The persecution of the wealthier Jews by Simon and John

(439) While the lower classes suffered thus at the hands of soldiers, the men of rank and wealth on the other hand were brought up before the party chiefs. Some were executed while falsely accused of conspiracy, others on the accusation of betraying the city to the Romans; but the readiest device was to pay an informer to allege that they had decided to desert. (440) When a man had been fleeced by Simon he was passed on to John; and he who had been plundered by John handed over to Simon. They drank each other's health in citizens' blood and divided the carcasses of their unfortunate victims. (441) In their desire for power, they were divided, but in their crimes they were unanimous; for the one who did not share with his partner the fruits of other people's misery was deemed a scurvy villain, while the one who received no share was aggrieved at being excluded from the barbarity, as if robbed of some good things.

5. Utter degradation of the Jewish race

(442) It is impossible to give a detailed account of their enormities, but we may sum it up by saying that no other city ever endured such miseries, and no generation in history has ever fathered so much crime. (443) In the end they even disparaged the Hebrew race in order to appear less impious if they thus treated strangers [*c*] and in fact actually owned what indeed they were themselves: slaves, the dregs of humanity and bastard scum of their nation. (444) It was they who overthrew the city and compelled the unwillingly Romans to be credited with so melancholy a triumph, and almost drew the tardy flames to the Temple! (445) In truth, when they watched the Temple burning from the Upper City, they were not sorry

nor did they shed a tear out of grief, though these signs of emotion were detected in the Roman ranks. But of this I shall speak later at the proper time, with a full account of what happened [*d*].

Chapter XI

1. Jewish prisoners crucified by the Romans

(446) Meanwhile the earthworks of Titus were nearing completion, notwithstanding the damaging fire from the ramparts to which his men were exposed. The general, moreover, sent a detachment of cavalry ordering it to ambush those who left town into the valleys in search of food. (447) Some of them were combatants no longer satisfied with what they could plunder, but the majority were penniless people, afraid to desert out of fear for their families; (448) for they could not hope to escape from the rebels if they deserted with their wives and children, and they could not endure leaving them behind lest they be butchered in their stead. (449) But hunger emboldened them to undertake these sorties, though they ran the risk of being caught even if they managed to slip away. But when they were caught they could not help resisting from fear of punishment or enslavement, and once they had fought it was too late to sue for mercy [*a*]. They were accordingly flogged and subjected before death to every form of torture, and finally crucified in front of the walls. (450) Titus, indeed, felt compassion for them, for every day five hundred or sometimes even more fell into his hands. On the other hand, he recognized the risk of letting prisoners of war go free, and surveillance of such a host of prisoners would tie up a great number of custodians; but his main reason for not stopping the crucifixions was the hope that the spectacle might induce the Jews to surrender out of fear that continued resistance would involve themselves in a similar fate [*b*]. (451) The soldiers, out of rage and hatred, amused themselves by nailing prisoners in various attitudes until no space could be found for the crosses due to their vast number, nor crosses for the bodies [*c*].

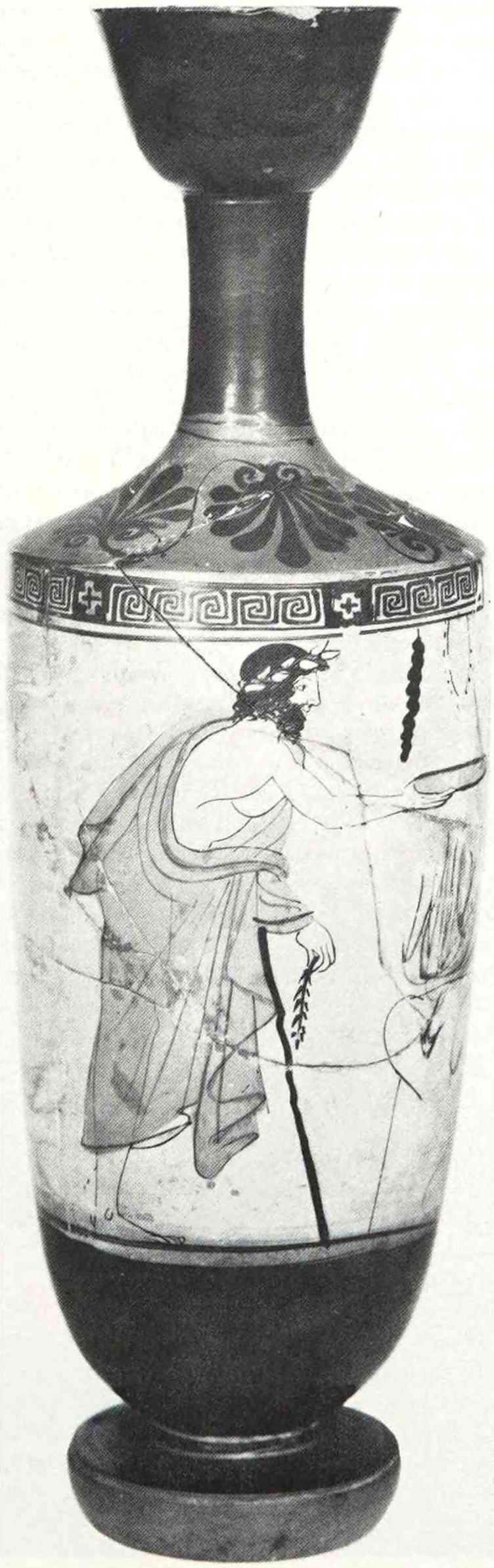
2. The insurgent chiefs' sophisticated trickery and Titus' admonition to the defiant leaders

(452) The insurgents, however, far from relenting at these sufferings, even told the rest of the people the opposite of the truth. (453) They dragged the families of the deserters to the wall, together with any citizens who were ready to come to terms with the Romans [*d*], and showed them the fate of those who deserted to the Romans, declaring that those crucified were suppliants, not captives. (454) Until the truth was discovered, this caused many who were eager to desert to remain in the city; some, however, crossed over instantly, knowing the punishment that awaited them, regarding death at the enemy's hands as a deliverance compared with starvation. (455) But Titus

451[*c*] *"Nor crosses for the bodies"* One may ask whether the author tried to clear Titus of dishonor for perpetrating such crimes against mankind? The general could, after all, have solved this difficulty by sending the prisoners elsewhere, but since he refused to discharge them (barring wealthier Jews whom he let go) or bother to post guards over them, he resorted to wholesale execution! Nevertheless, Josephus as a faithful historian did not try to hide the truth, and, in effect, he was not earnest in his apparent vindication of Titus.

453[*d*] *"Terms with the Romans"* These were worthless, as the Jews were all crucified. Hence this was the first time that the Zealots' strategy succeeded in preventing fugitives from leaving Jerusalem and going over to the camp of the enemy—after they witnessed the holocaust of crucifixions. Another occasion is mentioned in *War* VI, 115 ff.

A Hellenistic vase discovered near Hebron dating to the 2nd century BC, depicting a young Macedonian offering a libation



ordered that the hands of many of those captured be cut off so that they would not be mistaken for deserters and that their calamity might add credit to their statement; (456) he then sent them in to Simon and John, urging them now at least to pause and not compel him to destroy the city, but by a change of heart at the eleventh hour to save their own lives, their magnificent city, and a Temple that was unshared by others. (457) At the same time he went about the embankments [*a*] urging on the workers, to show that he intended shortly to follow up threats with action. (458) Thereupon, the Jews on the wall hurled insults at Caesar himself and at his father, crying that they scorned death, that they preferred an honorable death to slavery; that they would do all possible damage to the Romans while they had breath in them; what did their fatherland matter to those who, as he himself said, were doomed to die, and that the universe was a better sanctuary for God than this one [*b*]. (459) But, they added, it would yet be saved by Him that dwelt in it, and having Him for their ally, they would laugh at all menaces unsupported by action, for the issue lay with God. Such were the retorts [*c*] which they yelled, along with abuse.

3. Antiochus Epiphanes and the valiant "Macedonians"

(460) At this time there appeared on the scene Antiochus Epiphanes [*a*] with a large force of heavy infantry and a bodyguard of so-called Macedonians, all of the same age, tall, trained and equipped in the Macedonian fashion—hence their title, though most of them lacked any claim to belong to that people. (461) For all the kings owing allegiance to Rome [*b*], the king of Commagene [*b*] was the most prosperous—until suffering misfortune; but he too proved in his old age that no man before his death should be called happy. (462) However, Antiochus, who had arrived while his father's fortunes were at their zenith, expressed his surprise that a Roman army should hesitate to attack the ramparts; something of a warrior himself, he was naturally venturesome and so strong that his daring rarely failed to achieve its end. (463) Titus replied with a smile, "The field is open" [*c*], whereupon Antiochus instantly led his Macedonians in a sudden onslaught against the wall. (464) He himself, thanks to his strength and experience, was untouched by the Jewish missiles as he rained arrows at the defenders; but his young comrades, with few exceptions, were all overpowered; for out of respect for their engagement, they competed in their fight. (465) Finally they retired with many wounded, reflecting that even real Macedonians could only conquer if they had Alexander's fortune [*c*].

4. The Roman ramps completed, then partly undermined by John

(466) Though the Romans had begun their embankments on the twelth of the month Artemisius [*d*], they

457[*a*] *Embankments* Ramps over which siege engines were placed.
458[*b*] *"The universe was a better sanctuary for God than this one"* meaning that God reigned over a better Temple in the world at large. Josephus, who wrote in this vein after the ultimate tragedy, says in effect that "the house of God is not the ruined Temple, but the whole universe," which expresses in essence the Jewish belief in His universality.
459[*e*] *The retorts* This brings to mind an ancient axiom, that the soul of Jews is unfathomable, and other proof is the ultimate tragedy of Masada described in Book VII.
460[*a*] *Antiochus Epiphanes of Commagene* (who appears once more in *War* VII, 232) with his brother, fighting in defense of their father's kingdom. The Macedonians enjoyed a reputation for bravery since the days of Alexander the Great of Macedon.
461[*b*] "The king of Commagene," a client king of Rome, was Antiochus IV, who had perviously sent reinforcements to Cestius Gallus (*War* II, 500) and to Vespasian in Galilee (III, 68). Commagene was a small kingdom on the upper Euphrates river, between Cilicia and Armenia. Though the kingdom had reestablished its independence under Gaius Galigula, it was eventually annexed to Syria by Vespasian, when Antiochus IV was presumed to have planned a revolt (*War* VII, 219 ff).
463[*c*]-465[*c*] "The field is open" meaning that they were welcome to became partners in the struggle, but this was said by Titus with tongue in cheek. Josephus seems to describe young Antiochus' arrogance with a touch of irony, suggesting that soldiers had really assaulted the wall without consent of the emperor, who was not upset at the king's defeat. (The author was probably inspired to bring this up to get by the dreaded Roman censorship at the time he penned his manuscript in Rome).
466[*d*] These embankments were erected ca. May 30-June 16, AD 70.
467[*a*] *Pool Struthion* Its place in the topography of Jerusalem: The pool was partly rock-cut and partly vaulted over and now extant underneath the Convent of Notre Dame de Sion, and adjoining the Antonia (as illustrated) measuring 51 × 39 m. and some 13 m. deep. It was connected with an aqueduct decending from the site of the present Damascus gate where a reservoir collected the waters of the upper Tyropoeon valley. According to Josephus it appears that the pool was still a partly open reservoir, for Titus, as stated, built a ramp (termed "earthworks") through it to gain access for his battering rams, to the wall of the Antonia fortress. An interesting sequel to this episode is provided by the investigation conducted by P. Benoit O. P. (*Jerusalem Revealed*, p. 88, 1976). A pavement was built over the spot by Hadrian about 55 years later, as well as a triumphal arch. This pavement is identified with the *Lithostroton* under the Antonia, which has erroneously—and until recent years—been taken to be Pontius Pilate's *praetorium*, and the scene of Jesus' trial. In fact, this trial took place in the Roman governor's official residence situated in Herod's palace in the Upper City (site of the present Armenian Seminary, adjoining Herod's Citadel; (see the suggested and updated diagram of the scene of Jesus' trial and crucifixion. in *New Light on the Historical Jesus* by G. Cornfeld (1982). The site of Herod's palace can be located in the map facing text, paras. 268-269, namely left of the caption Upper City and over the shaded arrow line.
467[*b*] 20 cubits approx. 10 m.

were scarcely completed on the twenty-ninth, after seventeen days of continuous toil, (467) for the four embankments were of vast size. Of the first two, that facing the Antonia was thrown up by the fifth legion across the pool called *Struthion* [*a*]; the other, by the twelfth legion, about 20 cubits [*b*] away. (468) The tenth legion, a long way from these, to the north, was employed against the pool called *Amygdalon* [*c*]; while 30 cubits [*d*] from this the fifteenth were at work opposite the high priest's monument [*e*]. (469) But while the engines were already being brought up, John from within had tunneled through the ground from the Antonia right up to the embankments, underpinning the galleries with props [*f*], and thus leaving the Roman works without solid support; next he introduced timber and wood besmeared with pitch and bitumen and set them alight. (470) When the props had been consumed, the tunnel collapsed in a heap, and with a thunderous crash the embankments fell in. (471) At first there arose a dense cloud of smoke and dust as the flames were smothered by the debris, but as the mass of timber was burnt away, a vivid flame burst forth. (472) This sudden blow filled the Romans with consternation and they were depressed because of the ingenuity of the Jews. Moreover, as they had felt sure of imminent victory, the casualty dampened their hopes of ultimate success. To fight the flames seemed useless, for even if they extinguished them their earthworks had been swallowed up [*g*].

468[*c*] *Pool called Amygdalon* (in Hebrew Migdal, "Tower"). This is the original "Pool of Hezekiah" (near the site of the present Jaffa gate and in back of the Petra Hotel). Its original dimensions were some 98 m. long; at present they are 75 × 45 m. Its waters came from the vast and 8 m. deep Pool of Mamillah situated outside the wall. Cf. 260[*b*].

468[*d*] 30 cubits—15 m.

468[*e*] The monument of John, the high priest and king, cf. *War* V, 259, 356.

469[*f*] *Underpinning with props* These beams supported packed wet earth, pebbles and branches shaped in vault-like form to form a roof (as is still the custom in Arab villages before the advent of cement). A series of such vaults could support the weight of the earthworks so long as they were not weighted with Roman engines and the motion of trampling men.

472[*g*] *Swallowed up* Cf. 467[*a*] and comments on the historic and topographic features of the site.

473[*a*] *"The other embankments"* were those erected against the Upper City walls, the zone commanded by Simon-bar-Giora, while John commanded the Lower City, the Temple area and the Antonia.

474[*b*] *Garis*—a village east of Zippori (Sepphoris), possibly Khirbet Cana (John 2, 1 ff.; 4, 46 ff), and the site of Josephus' early camp when Vespasian invaded Galilee (*War* III, 128-129).

474[*c*] *Mariamme,* a princess and daughter of Agrippa I, sister of Agrippa II (*War* II, 220).

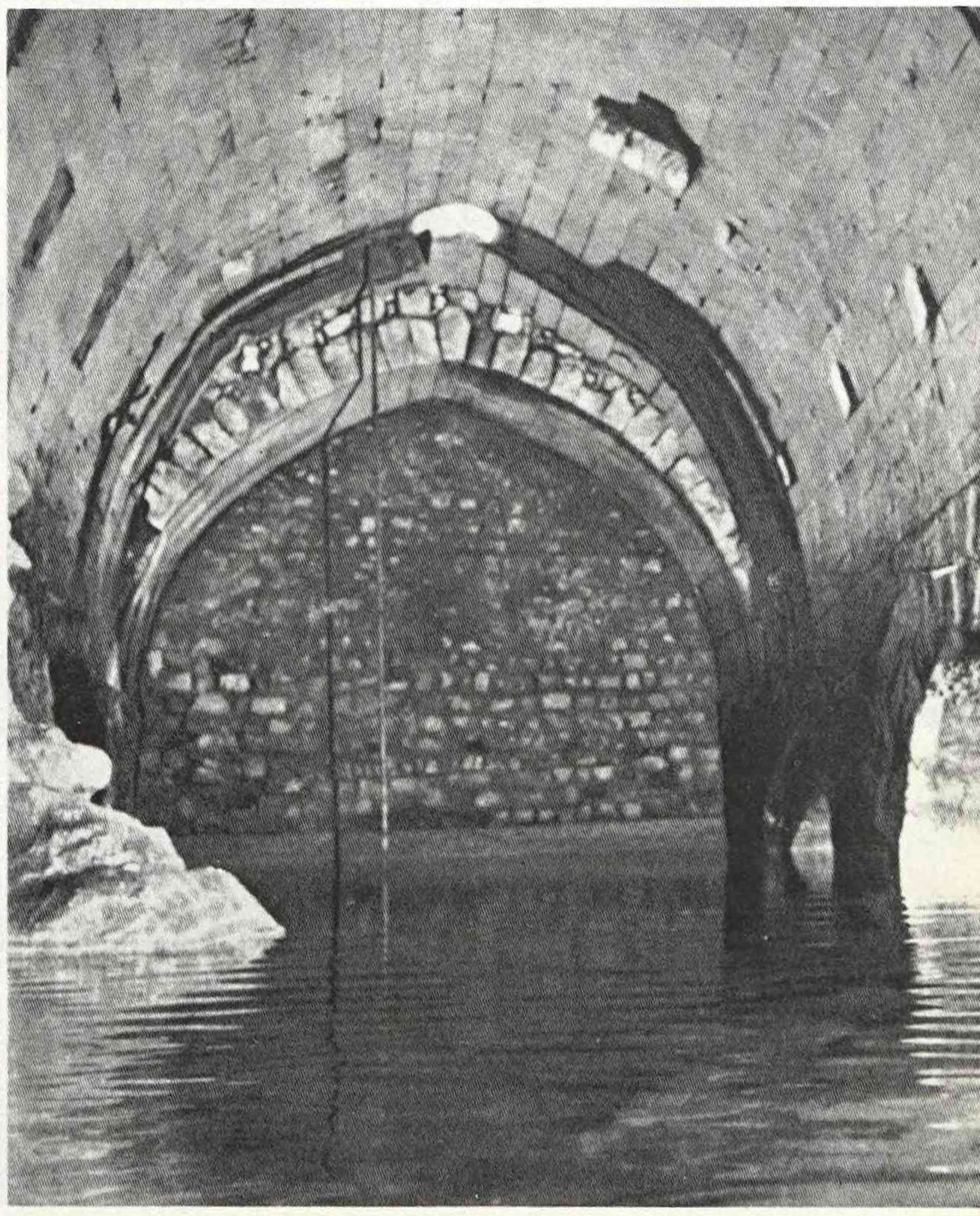
474[*d*] *Caegiras,* a distortion of the Aramaean "haggera" or lame man.

479[*e*] *Embankments*—the ramps. Cf. 457[*a*].

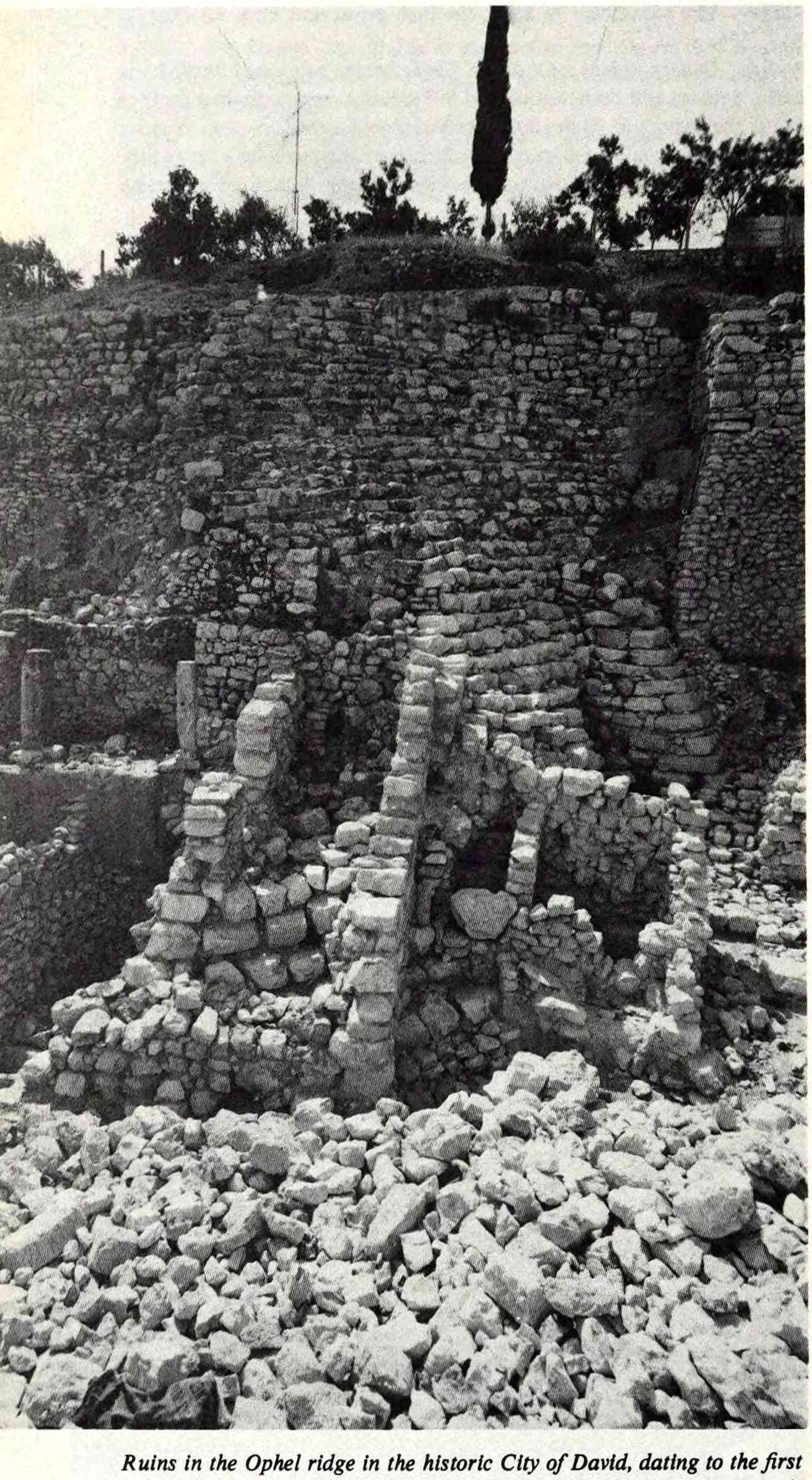
The Struthion pool at that time may still have been an open reservoir. Titus built a ramp over it or through it to gain access to the wall of Antonia and place his battering ram. The pool, covered by barrel-vaults, is still extant under the pavement of the Monastery of St. Anne along the Via Dolorosa. Hence the pool was not included in the Antonia tower but led to it

5. Simon's attack on the other ramps; the Jews' invasion of the Roman camp

(473) Two days later Simon's forces launched a further attack on the other embankments [*a*], for the Romans had brought up the ramps on that side and were already battering the wall. (474) A certain Gephthaeus who came from Garis [*b*], a town in Galilee, and Magassarus, a soldier of the king [*c*] and one of the henchmen of Mariamme [*c*], along with the son of a certain Nabataeus from Adiabene, nicknamed Ceaġıras [*d*] which means "lame", because of his disability, snatched up torches and rushed at the engines. (475) In the whole course of the war the city produced no one more heroic than these three nor were there any who inspired greater terror, sallying out of town. (476) As though running toward friends rather than the enemy ranks, they neither hesitated nor shrank back, but charged through the midst of the enemy and set the engines on fire. (477) Attacked with shots and swords from every quarter, nothing could move them from their perilous course until the fire had caught hold of the engines. (478) With the flames already towering aloft, the Romans came rushing from the encampments to the rescue, while the Jews obstructed them from the ramparts and, utterly disregarding their personal danger, struggled hand-to-hand with those who were endeavoring to extinguish the flames. (479) On the one side were the Romans at-



484[*a*] *Quick-firers* Scorpions.
485[*b*] Josephus relates this episode with evident pride, underscoring the damage to the painstaking siege preparations of the Romans.



Ruins in the Ophel ridge in the historic City of David, dating to the first millennium BC. It is situated in "Area G" (as defined by archaeologists). A violent outcry arose over this excavation in 1982 when the orthodox Rabbinate claimed that it disturbed ancient Jewish bones, hence desecrating them (see page 332)

Opposite page: Entrance to the tomb believed to be that of Herod's family (near the King David Hotel in Jerusalem). It features the usual stone-cut main entrance, side loculi *(chambers and niches), and the heavy rolling-stone that forestalled intrusion. Herod himself was buried at Herodion (see* War *I)*

tempting to drag the battering-engines out of the fire while their wicker shelters blazed; on the other side the Jews, surrounded by flames, pulled the other way, clutching the red-hot iron and refusing to relinquish the rams. From the engines the fire spread to the embankments [*e*], outstripping the defenders. (480) Thereupon the Romans, enveloped in flames and despairing of saving their handiwork, beat a retreat to their camps; (481) while the Jews pursued them hard, their numbers constantly swelled by fresh reinforcements from the city, and, emboldened by their success, pressed on with uncontrolled impetuosity right up to the [Roman] entrenchments, finally grappling with the sentries. (482) There is a line of troops, periodically relieved, which occupies a position in front of every camp and is subject to the very drastic Roman law that he who quits his post under any pretext whatsoever must be executed. (483) These men, preferring an heroic death to capital punishment, stood their ground, and at their desperate plight many of the fugitives returned ashamed. (484) Posting the quick-firers [*a*] along the camp wall, they kept at bay the masses who, without a thought for safety or personal defense, were pouring out of the city. The Jews grappled with any who stood in their path, and unguardedly flinging their very bodies against the enemy's spear points, would strike at their antagonists. (485) But their advantage lay less in deeds than in daring, and the Romans yielded rather to intrepidity than to their own losses [*b*].

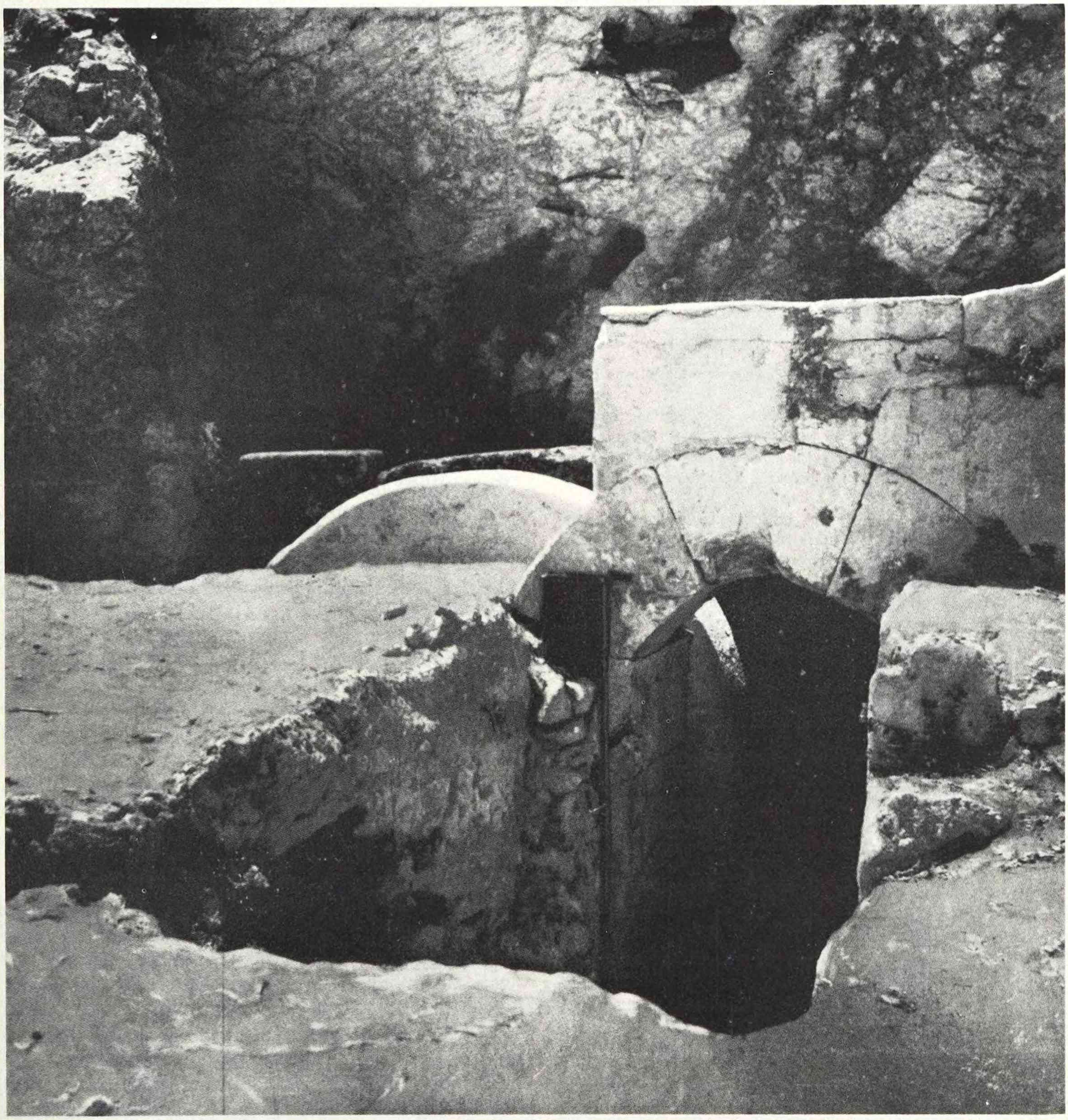
6. The attack repulsed by Titus; the Jews' withdrawal into the city

(486) Now at last Titus appeared from the Antonia, where he had gone to choose a site for fresh embankments. He severely reprimanded his troops, who after capturing the enemy's fortifications, endangered their own, and had put themselves in the position of the besieged by freeing the Jews from their prison house; (487) then he himself at the head of his picked men attacked the enemy in the flank; but though assailed from the front as well, they turned around and resolutely resisted him. In the confusion of the battle, blinded by the dust and deafened by the din, neither side could distinguish friend from foe. (488) The Jews still stood firm not so much through prowess now as from despair of salvation, while the Romans were braced by respect for their honor and their arms, especially with Caesar in the forefront of the danger. (489) Such was the fury of the Romans that the struggle, I imagine, would have ended in the capture of the entire Jewish host, had they not forestalled the turn of the battle by retreating into the city. (490) The Romans, however, with their embankments destroyed, were downhearted, having lost the fruits of their long labors in one hour, and many felt that through the use of conventional weaponry they would never capture the city.

Chapter XII

1. Titus' council of war

(491) Titus held a council of war with his officers. The more sanguine were for bringing up the entire force and attempting a full-scale assault; for hitherto only separate fractions of their forces had been engaged with the Jews; (492) whereas, if they advanced *en masse,* the Jews would yield to their onslaught, for they would be overwhelmed by the hail of missiles. (493) Of the more cautious some urged that the embankments be reconstructed. Others advised abandoning these and resorting to a blockade, merely preventing the inhabitants from making sorties and bringing in food, thus leaving the city to starve and refraining from combat; (494) for there was no battling with desperate men who prayed to die by the sword, and for whom—if that was denied them—a more horrible fate was in store. (495) Titus thought it undignified to let so large a force remain idle, while there was no point in fighting those who would soon destroy each other. (496) He pointed out that throwing up embankments was a hopeless task, with materials so scarce, and to prevent sorties was still more difficult. For, to form a ring of men around so big a city, and over such difficult terrain, was no easy



matter, and would expose them to the risk of enemy attacks. (497) They might block the obvious outlets, but the Jews by necessity and local knowledge would contrive secret ways out; and if provisions were smuggled in, the siege would be prolonged still further. (498) He feared, moreover, that the luster of success would be dimmed by the delay, for, given time, anything could be accomplished, but haste was essential to win renown. (499) If they wanted to combine speed with safety, they must throw a dyke [*a*] around the whole city; that was the only way to block every exit, and only thus would the Jews abandon their last hope of survival and surrender the city, or, wasted by famine, fall an easy prey. (500) He himself would not sit still, but would once more turn his attention to the embankments when he had an enfeebled foe to obstruct him. (501) And if anyone considered this a difficult operation, he ought to remember that trivial tasks did not suit the Romans, and that without toil nothing great could easily be achieved by any man [*b*].

2. The continuous line of the outer Roman dyke

(502) Having thus convinced his high officers, Titus ordered them to divide up the work between their units. The troops thereupon were seized with an inspired enthusiasm and, when the circuit of the wall had been apportioned, there was competition not only between the legions, but even between the component companies; (503) the soldier was eager to please his decurion, the decurion his centurion, the centurion the tribune, while the emulation of the tribunes extended to the staff officers [*c*], and in the rivalry between these officers Caesar himself was umpire; he personally went around frequently to inspect the work. (504) Starting at the Assyrian camp [*d*], the site of his own encampment, he directed the wall towards the lower region of the New Town and from there across the Kidron to the Mount of Olives; (505) then, bending towards the south, he enclosed the mount as far as the rock called Peristereon [*e*], together with the adjoining hill which overhangs the Siloam ravine. From there he descended in a westerly direction down into the Valley of the Fountain [*f*]; then beyond it ascending to the tomb of Ananus, the high priest [*g*] and, (506) cutting across the mountain where Pompey [*a*] had encamped, he turned north and proceeded to a village called the House of Vetch [*b*], (507) and rounding Herod's Monument [*c*], so joined the east side of the general's own camp, the starting place. (508) The line measured 39 furlongs [*d*] in length and had attached to its outside thirteen forts with a combined circumference of over 10 furlongs [*e*]. (509) The whole was built in three days, though it might have taken months [*f*], the speed being almost incredible. (510) Having surrounded the city within this wall and posted garrisons in the forts, Titus himself took the first night watch and inspected everything; the second he entrusted to Alexander [*g*]; (511) for the third the

499[*a*] *Dyke* See map of the siege.

501[*b*] Classic Sophoclean expression which may have been quoted from Titus himself, Titus being familiar with Greek literature.

503[*c*] Staff officers or generals.

504[*d*] *Assyrian camp* The dyke began near the Psephinus tower, cf. 303. The erection of this dyke was carried out with amazing speed between the first and the third of Sivan (approx. June). It was intended to ring the whole city with a continuous wall; see its contour in the accompanying map of the siege. The dyke was made up of, and held together by piled earth, large stones, and branches; the use of such materials accounts for the great speed of the work, and the legionaries, as well as the auxiliaries, were trained to such tasks.

505[*e*] *Peristereon*—or *Dovecote,* situated apparently on the eastern slope of the *Mount of Anointing (Har Hamishcha,* namely the Mount of Olives) and overlooking the Kidron valley, where well-fed pigeons were bred to be sold and offered as sacrifices by the humble people. A brace of pigeons (or fowl) were purchased packed in wicker baskets. In the case of women, the baskets were brought to the entrance of the priests' court; the latter offered them on the altar in their behalf, as women were not allowed to proceed any further (*Mishna* and *Talmud Menahot* 8 and 9).

505[*f*] *Valley of the Fountain* The junction of the valleys of Kidron and Hinnom; see map.

505[*g*] *Ananus,* apparently the elder high priest mentioned in *Antiquities* XVIII, 197 ff, including the younger and more celebrated Ananus (Hanan) who was assassinated by the Zealots (*War* IV, 315). The eminence of the high priestly house of Hanan was due both to the succession of five high priests and to its marriages with other high priestly families (cf. *War* II, 240, John 18, 13). The tomb in question lay between the Valley of the Fountain (Ein Rogēl) and *Pompey's Camp* (506[*g*]) on the eminence now known as Deir-Abu-Tor east of the Jerusalem railway station.

506[*a*] *Pompey's hill,* or camp, southwest of the First Wall; see map, or on the high hill overlooking it.

506[*b*] *House of Vetch*—opposite the Valley of Rephaim, west of the Jerusalem railway station.

507[*c*] *Herod's monument* is the rock-hewn family burial cave of the Herodian family, as illustrated. It will be noted from V, 108 that Titus had formerly reduced all the intervening ground between the walls and the present dyke to dead level in preparation for the siege.

508[*d*] 39 furlongs—approx. 7.8 kms.

508[*e*] 10 furlongs—2 kms. The little forts encircling the dyke, protected the structure against attack and garrisoned the guards on the lookout for escaping Jews. All escapees, as noted, were destined to die.

509[*f*] Cf. 504[*c*].

510[*g*] *Tiberius Alexander* Titus' chief of staff. Cf. V, 45 and a cousin of Philo, the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher.

512[*a*] The second description of the famine is notable for greater dramatic intensity and graphic language; its tightening grip is pictured as a ravenous bird of prey leaving the pall of sheer terror in its wake. Josephus' imagination was fertile, but even if only half of what he said is true, it was still horrible beyond words.

commanders of the legions drew lots. The sentries, too drew lots, and all night long they patrolled the intervals between the forts.

3. The deadly impact of the unbroken famine; the neglect of burial

(512) When all exits were closed to the Jews, every hope of escape was now eliminated; and the famine, strengthening its hold [*a*], devoured the people, houses and families, one after another. (513) The roofs were full of women and infants in the last stages of exhaustion, the alleys with the corpses of the aged; children and young men, swollen with hunger, haunted the market places and collapsed wherever faintness overcame them. (514) Those who were ill had not the strength to bury their kinsfolk, and those who were still fit hesitated to do so because of the multitude of the dead and the uncertainty of their own fate. Many, as they buried the fallen, fell dead themselves, while others set out for their graves before their fate was upon them [*b*]. (515) And throughout these calamities, no weeping or lamentation was heard: hunger stifled emotion; and with dry eyes and grinning mouths those who were slow to die watched those whose end came sooner. Deep silence blanketed the city, and night laden with death was in the grip of a yet fiercer foe—the brigands. (516) They broke as tomb-plunderers into the houses, rifled the deceased and stripped the coverings from their bodies, then departed laughing; they tried the points of their swords on the corpses, even transfixed some of the wretches who lay prostrate but still living, to test the steel, and any who implored them to employ their hand and sword-thrust to end their misery, they disdainfully left to perish of hunger. (517) And each victim breathed his last with his eyes transfixed on the Temple, turning his gaze from the rebels he was leaving alive. (518) The latter at first ordered these bodies to be buried at public expense, for they found the stench intolerable; later, when this proved impossible, they flung them from the ramparts into the ravines.

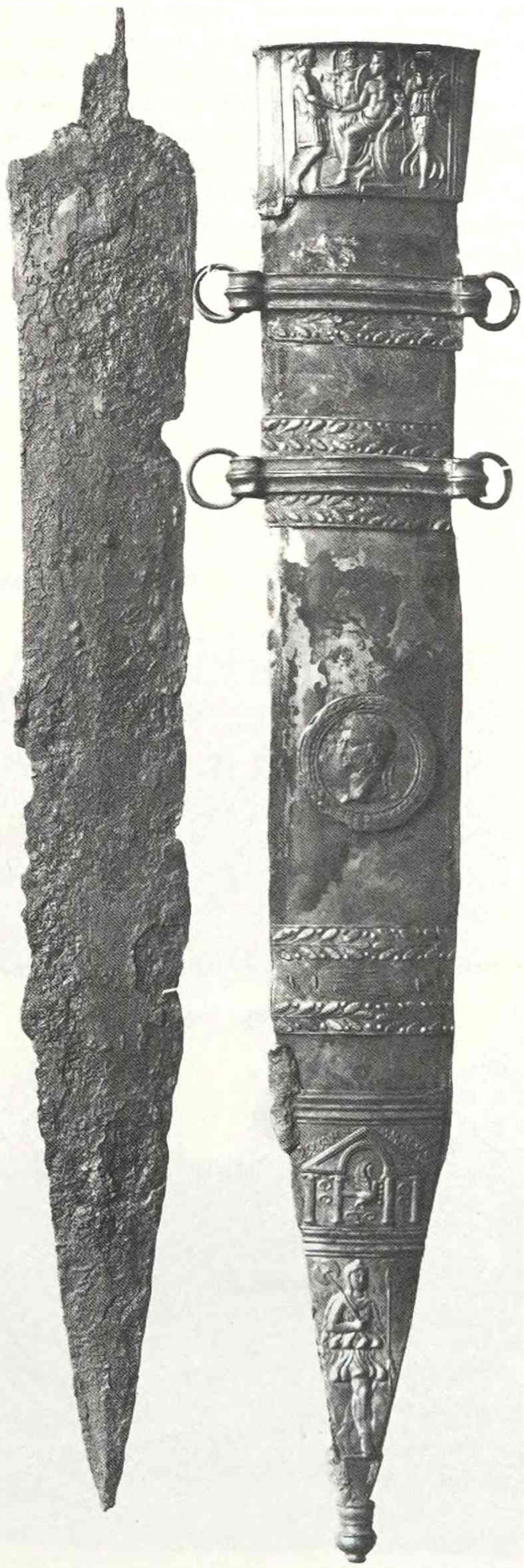
4. Resumption of the embankments in the face of death within

(519) When Titus, in the course of his rounds, saw these valleys choked with the dead, and the putrid ooze trickling from under the clammy carcasses, he groaned and, raising his hands to heaven, called on God to witness that this was not his doing [*c*]. Such were conditions within the city. (520) The Romans, meanwhile, were relieved of further sorties by the rebels (for now these too felt the grip of despondency and famine) and were happy with an abundance of wheat and other necessities from Syria and the adjoining provinces; (521) many soldiers would approach the ramparts and display their ample supplies of victuals, inflaming the pangs of the enemy's hunger with their own superabundance [*c*]. (522) But when the rebels remained unmoved by their sufferings, Titus,

514[*b*] *Before their fate...* They hastened their own end by attending to the disposal of the deceased.

519[*c*]-521[*c*] *Titus' strategy; "hunger ... abundance..."* The author's obvious attempt to eulogize Titus' "humane" motives is an exercise in rationalization. The general was not so much depressed by the aftermath of the famine than by the failure of his strategy. Para. 522 proves his belief that reerection of embankments would frighten the people into submission, even though this would involve a loss of time. He centered four platforms around the Antonia and eased the siege of the Upper Town, as it was sealed off already by the dyke. The concentration of the four legions into the crowded space near Antonia shows that he meant to destroy the wall with violent attacks, but his legions were not ready for such a mighty effort, which would cost so many lives.

Unfortunate deserters were ripped open by daggers and other short arms



taking pity on the remnants of the people and anxious at least to rescue the survivors, again began erecting embankments, though it was difficult to secure timber, (523) for all the trees around the city had been cut down for the previous works, and the troops had to collect fresh material from a distance of ninety furlongs [*a*]. The new mounds were raised only opposite the Antonia, in four sections, and were much larger than the former embankments. (524) Caesar, meanwhile, made the rounds of the legions to speed up the work and show the brigands that they were now in his hands. (525) But they alone seemed to have lost all sense of remorse; and, divorcing soul from body, acted as if neither belonged to them [*b*]. (526) For their souls could neither be tamed by suffering nor their bodies by pain, seeing that they continued, like dogs, to maul the carcasses of the people with their fangs, and to fill the prisons with the weak.

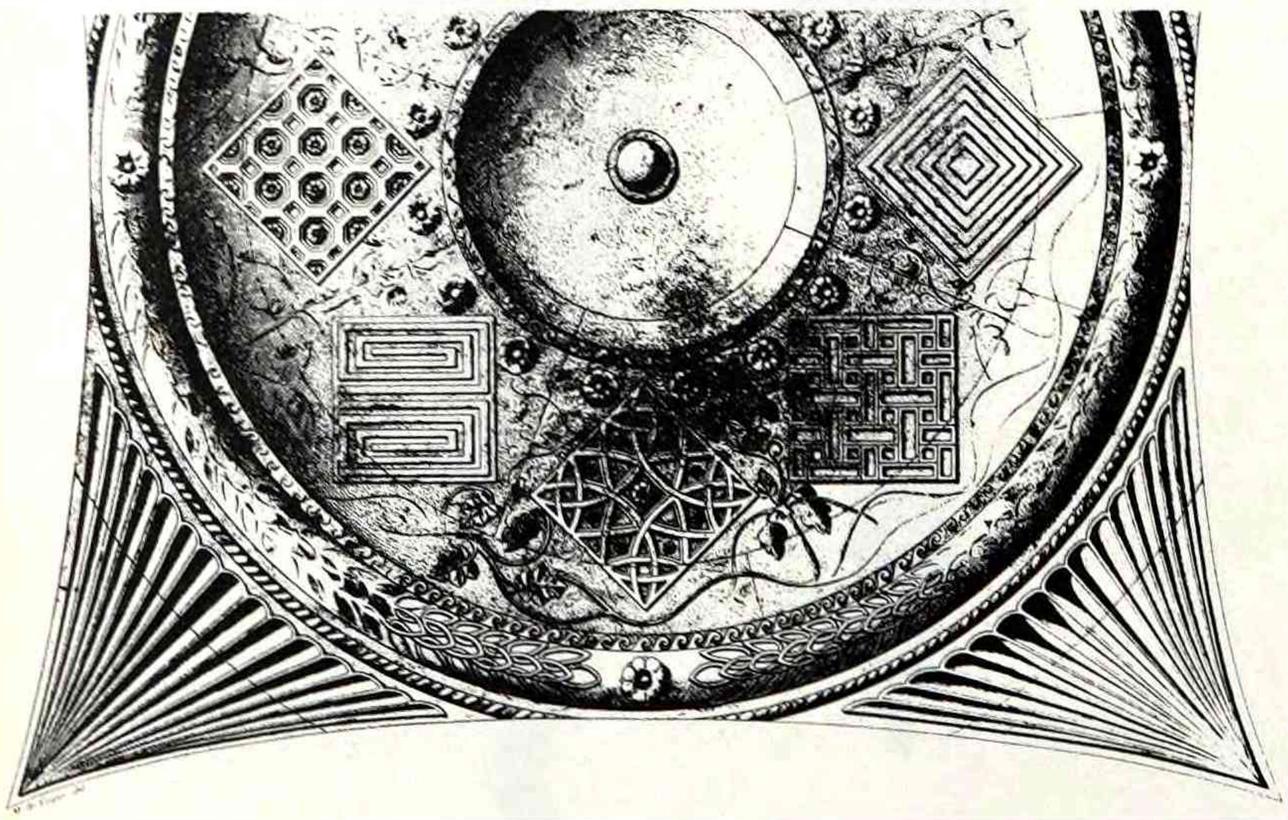
Chapter XIII

1. Simon's murder of Matthias, his former patron and ally

(527) Simon actually did not even allow Matthias, to whom he owed the mastery of the city, to go untortured to his death. Matthias the son of Boethus and scion of high priests [*c*], had enjoyed the special trust and respect of the people. (528) When the masses were being maltreated by the Zealots—whom John had already joined—he had persuaded the people to admit Simon as an ally [*d*], without making any previous stipulation with him, or expecting foul play on his part. (529) But when Simon had arrived and mastered the city, he considered the very man who had advocated his cause as an enemy, like the rest, as if he had been helpful out of pure simplicity. (530) Matthias was brought up before him, accused of siding with the Romans, and without even being allowed to defend himself was condemned to death, along with three of his sons, the fourth having already fled to Titus. When Matthias begged to be slain before his children, asking this favor in return for his having opened the gates to him, Simon ordered that he be slain last. (531) He was, accordingly, slain over the bodies of his sons, who had been murdered before his eyes, after having been led out in full view of the Romans. Such were the instructions given by Simon to Ananus son of Bagadates [*a*], the most brutal of his henchmen, adding in irony, "Let him see whether the friends to whom he intended to desert will assist him." He even refused burial to the bodies. (532) After their deaths, a priest named Ananias son of Masbalus, a man of distinction, and Aristeus, the scribe of the Council [*b*], a native of Emmaus, together with fifteen distinguished citizens, were put to death. (533) Josephus' father was detained in prison [*c*]. An edict forbade any throughout the city to assemble or to gather in any place—through fear of betrayal—and to

523[*a*] 90 furlongs—14.5 kms. or a 4½ hours journey.
525[*b*] The meaning of this passage is in doubt. It seems to compare the men to beasts which cannot distinguish between body and soul, and care not what happens to either.
527[*c*] *Matthias* the son of Boethus should not be taken literally as the son of a man called Boethus but rather signifies that he belonged to the prestigious priestly family by that name. Cf. IV, 564 regarding the sincere political intervention of this scion of the family on behalf of Simon-bar-Giora. The irony of fate is that Matthias, who was popular with the people, had paved the way for the rise of Simon as leader in Jerusalem in order to weaken the influence of the Zealots and his rival, John of Gischala. This Matthias must not be confused with Matthias son of Theophilus, the high priest at the outset of the revolt. From *War* VI, 114 we learn that the flight of Matthias' fourth son did not precede his father's death, but followed it. In sum, Simon-bar-Giora continued to act harshly against the upper classes, whom he suspected of conspiracy with the enemy.
528[*d*] Cf. IV. 574.
531[*a*] Ananus son of Bagadates is identified below (*War* VI, 229) as Ananus of Emmaus who deserted to the Romans with Archelaus son of Magadatus or Bagadates (Hanan ben Bagadta in Hebrew), VI, 229.
532[*b*] The Council, namely the local *boulé*, a municipal administrative association, not the Sanhedrin as suggested by commentators. The *boulé* of Jerusalem is mentioned by Dio Cassius LXVI, 6, 2 alongside with the people and the priests. Mark 15, 43 also knows Joseph of Arimathaea as a councillor, and the Talmud speaks of the existence of the Council Chamber (Lishkat bouleutin) in the Temple (*Antiq.* II, 405) *War* II, 331, 336 *Pal. Tal. Ta'anit* IV, 69a).
533[*c*] Cf. V, 419.

The Herodian stucco decoration in the Double gate vestibule



execute, without inquiry, persons participating in joint lamentations.

2. Simon's discovery of a plot to surrender the city

(534) Seeing all this, Judes, son of Judes [*a*], a subordinate whom Simon had entrusted with the command of a tower, partly out of compassion for the victims so cruelly slain, but chiefly with an eye to his own safety, called together ten of his most reliable men [*b*] and said: (535) "How long shall we endure these crimes? What hope of survival have we if we remain loyal to this villain? (536) We are starving already and the Roman army is almost in the town; Simon is betraying his benefactors; is he not likely to punish us soon, while the pledge of the Romans can be trusted? (537) Come, let us surrender the ramparts and save ourselves and the city! Simon will suffer no great loss if, despairing of his life, he is punished sooner!" (538) This argument convinced the ten, and early the next morning he sent off the rest of his men in several directions to avoid discovery of the plot, and three hours later he called out from the tower to the Romans. (539) Some of the latter scorned him, others were incredulous, while the majority shrank from interfering, certain that they would soon capture the city without hazard. (540) However, as Titus advanced with a body of troops, Simon, receiving timely evidence, was ahead of him by promptly occupying the tower; he arrested and slew the men in full view of the Romans, mutilated their bodies, and threw them over the wall [*a*].

3. Josephus hit and reported killed

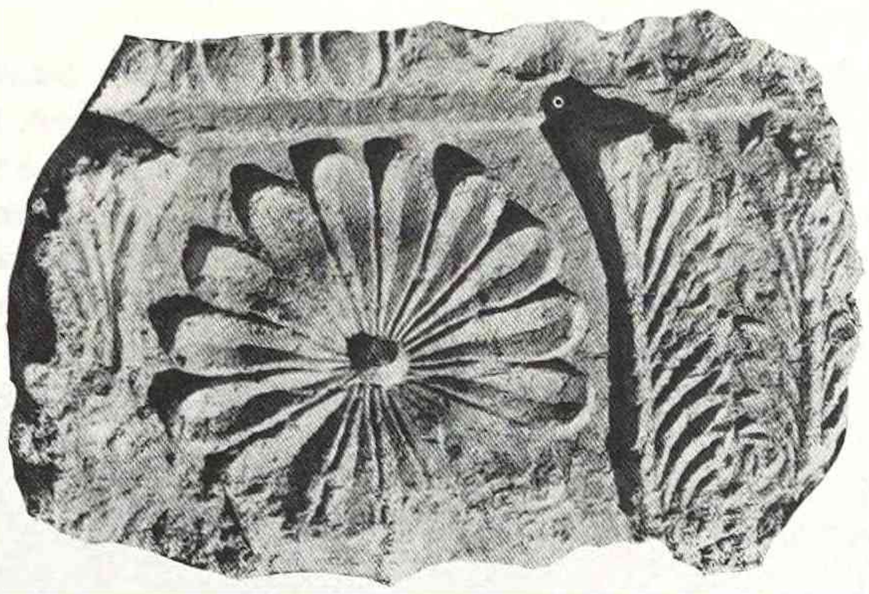
(541) At this time while Josephus was going his rounds—for he did not cease appealing—he was struck on the head with a stone and fell unconscious. The Jews made a rush for the body, and would have dragged him into the city had not Caesar promptly sent a rescue party. (542) During the ensuing conflict Josephus was picked up, little conscious of what was going on; while the rebels, thinking they had disposed of the man they hated most, shouted for joy. (543) When the report spread through the city, the survivors of the populace were deeply dejected, believing that they had really lost the man who encouraged them to desert. (544) The mother of Josephus, hearing in prison that her son was dead, said to the guards, "When the news came from Jotapata [*b*], I was sure of it; indeed I had no joy over him in his lifetime." (545) But privately she lamented to her handmaidens, "This, then, is the fruit that I reap of my blessed childbearing that I am to be denied the burial of the son by whom I hoped to be buried." (546) Happily, however, the false report neither grieved her nor cheered the brigands for long; for Josephus, quickly recovering from the blow, came forward to shout that he would before long be avenged on them for wounding him and renewed his exhortations to the people to accept his assurances. (547) His reappearance brought new hope to the common folk and filled the rebels with dismay.

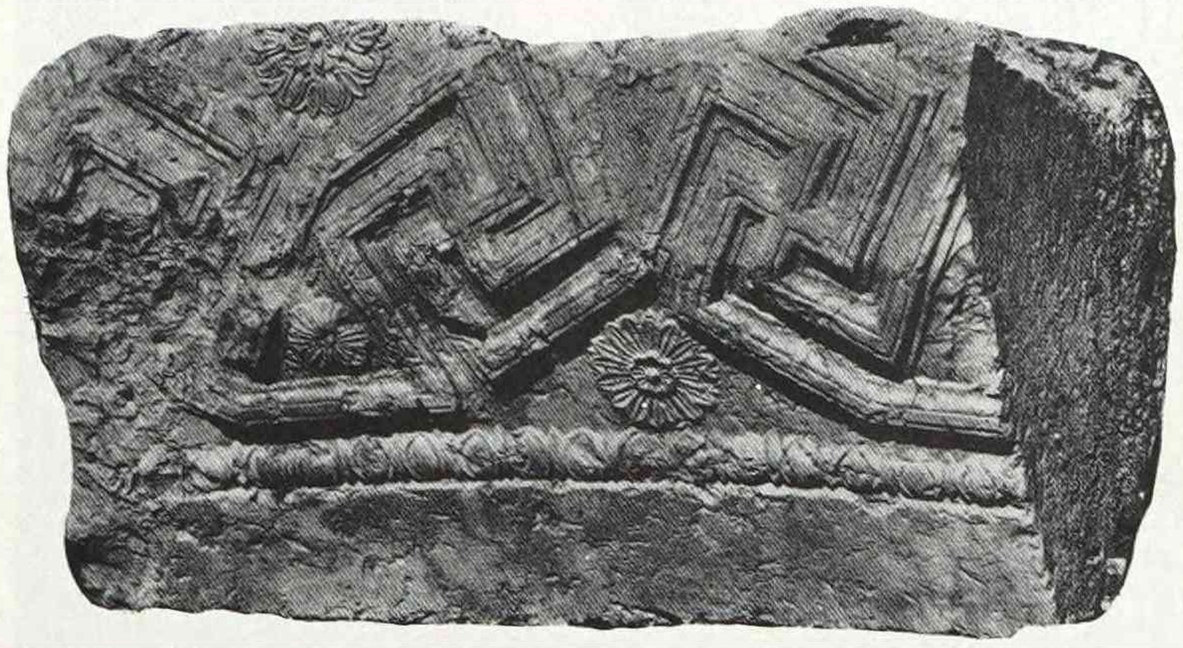
534[*a*] *Namely Judah son of Judah* Nothing is known of his origin as well as that of the other men in Simon's force (*War* V, 322, VI, 360).

534[*b*]-540[*a*] Note the striking similarity of this to the account of Cestius Gallus' episode and the Jewish overtures to surrender Jerusalem in *War* II, 533 ff. "The Romans did not consider their war against Judaea to be directed against a given movement of rebels *within* the nation (to which the majority were opposed) in order to extirpate the evil from its midst and restore the original position, as Josephus would have us infer... It appears that from the outset of this revolt against the Jewish people in Palestine, as is evident from Roman actions at the end of the war which Caesar proclaimed, that the whole of Judaea was his private domain... and deprived them of their political autonomy" (G. Alon, *ibid.*, p. 288-289). In sum, it was the Roman practice to exile the fugitives and settle them in internment camps, either in Palestine or in "foreign parts"; and on the whole they intended to suppress the nation in every possible way.

544[*b*] *Jotapata:* Cf. III, 432 ff. The author does not relate anywhere what happened to his parents after this episode.

Stone carvings from the Temple found in recent excavations





550[*a-b*] *The horrible nemesis that befell the deserters* The splitting open of their bellies—a brutality that was repeatedly committed for a long time—is portrayed as having been perpetrated despite the threats of Titus. The sequel is told in the following paragraph. *The value of gold coins:* a decrease by half was noted in the Syrian markets during the last phase of the war. *Jewish coins:* It was a sign of revolt when the Zealots minted in silver. They abhorred pagan coins which portrayed human representations and Roman mythological legends. The Jewish silver shekels of the war were issued from "Year One" to "Five." "The short inscriptions, actually slogans, appearing on the coins of the Jewish Revolt against Rome are in a way historical documents for they are indicative of the several phases in the course of each of the revolts, of their goals, and of the leading personages... Early in the First Revolt, coins were struck bearing the date "Year Two" (AD 67) and "Year Three": (68), accompanied on the reverse by: "The freedom of Zion". In AD 69 when Jerusalem was already under siege and all hope of freeing the entire country from the Roman yoke had failed, the inscriptions on the coins changed, now reading, "For the redemption of Zion". The term "redemption" here is commonly thought to signify "that the Jews no longer had any hope for freedom by force of arms, but only for divine salvation..." *Inscriptions Reveal,* p. 95, J'lem 1973 (see illustrations). Smaller bronze coins were also struck from the "Year Four" onwards. There is no record of Jewish gold coins being issued throughout this period. Though Josephus stated out that the Attic drachma was worth a quarter of a shekel "The shekel was actually equivalent to four Tyrian drachme" (A. Ben-David, *Palestine Exploration Quarterly,* p. 169, 196-6.) Hence 25 drachmae was equivalent to a little over 6 shekels. After the destruction and plunder of Jerusalem "the standard of gold was depreciated of half its former value" (*War,* VI, 317).

551[*c*] Arab — namely Nabateans.

556[*a*] *Evil reputation* Josephus' ready exculpation of most Romans from hatred of Jews is also disproved by the evidence produced by Dio Cassius (*ibid.,* 66, 5). The Romans spread rumors to the effect that the refugees whom they apprehended were poisoning the water in their possession and slowly poisoning any Romans who came to them (apparently some deserted to them, a fact mentioned incidentally by Josephus in *War* V, 258). Dio Cassius relates also that after Titus decided not to spare the lives of any more deserters from Jerusalem, there were Romans who despaired of victory and gave themselves up; they were treated kindly by the Jews (cf. V, 268).

559[*b*] Josephus' arrogation of pronouncing sentence on behalf of the Lord who punishes His flock seems out of place at this point. He was wont at times, as noted, to emulate Jeremiah's wrath; and yet he had just qualified the Roman crimes (552) as "the most cruel calamity that befell the Jews." As he concludes that Jews appeared to be no more than predestined victims of their murderers because God had forsaken his nation (559), he shows signs of excessive oratorical zeal.

4. Jewish bodies ripped open by Syrians and Nabateans

(548) Some of the deserters, seeing no other way, promptly leapt from the ramparts. Others, armed with stones advanced as if to battle, then fled to the Romans. But their fate was worse than that of their comrades who stayed in the city; and the hunger they had left behind, they discovered, was less deadly than the plenty the Romans provided. (549) They arrived bloated by starvation like persons affected with dropsy, then gulping their food they stuffed their stomachs till they burst, though some had learned by experience to restrain their appetites and take the unaccustomed nourishment a little at a time. (550) But even those who escaped this danger fell victim to another disaster. For a refugee in the Syrian ranks was found picking gold coins from his excreta [*a*]. As I have mentioned, they had swallowed coins before leaving the city because they were all searched by the rebels; moreover, gold was so plentiful in Jerusalem that it was possible to purchase for twelve Attic drachmas coins formerly worth twenty-five [*b*]. (551) But when this artifice was discovered through one man, a rumor spread throughout the camps that the deserters had come stuffed with gold; whereupon the Arab [*c*] rabble and the Syrians cut open the deserters and searched their intestines; (552) this was indeed the cruelest calamity that befell the Jews; actually in a single night no fewer than two thousand were ripped up.

5. Titus' stern reprimand

(553) When Titus learned of this outrage, he was on the point of ordering his cavalry to surround the culprits and shoot them down; but far too many were implicated, and those to be punished far outnumbered their victims. (554) Instead, he summoned both the auxiliaries and the legionary commanders (for some of his own men were accused of participating). (555) Addressing both groups, he said that he was indignant that soldiers in his service did such things on the off chance of gain and paid no heed to their own arms that were studded with silver and gold. (556) He expressed his wrath to the Arabians and Syrians because, serving in a war not their own, they began by giving unrestrained license to their greed, and secondly because they involved the Romans in their bloodthirsty butchery and hatred of the Jews, seeing that some of his own soldiers now shared their evil reputation [*a*]. (557) Therefore he threatened to punish these foreigners with death should anyone be caught henceforth daring to commit such a crime; he directed the legionaries to search for suspected offenders and to bring them before him. (558) But avarice, it seems, scorns every penalty and an extraordinary love of gain is ingrained in man, no other emotion being as strong as greed; (559) though under different circumstances such passions are kept within bounds, and subdued by deterrents, here God seems

to have condemned His whole people and was turning every means of escape to their own destruction [*b*]. (560) Thus what Caesar forbade with threats was still done furtively to the deserters. These barbarians advanced to meet the refugees before the troops had noticed them and massacred them, looking around to make sure that no Roman saw them, then ripped them up and extracted the filthy money from their bowels. (561) In few, however, was any found, the majority being victims of the murderers' greed. Fear of such a fate, in fact, drove many of the deserters to return.

6. John's plunder of the Temple treasures

(562) When there was nothing left that John could plunder from the people, he turned to sacrilege, melting down many of the offerings in the Temple and many of the vessels required for public worship—bowls, trays and tables—not even keeping his hands off the flagons for the pure wine presented by Augustus and his consort. (563) For the Roman sovereigns always honored and added embellishment to the Temple; but now this Jew expropriated even the donations of foreigners, telling his companions (564) that they should have no scruple in using God's property for God's benefit and that these who fought for the Temple were entitled to be supported by it [*a*]. (565) Accordingly, he used all the sacred wine and the oil that the priests kept in the inner Temple [*b*] for pouring on the burnt offerings and distributed them to his band, who, without a qualm, anointed themselves with the oil and drank their fill of the wine. (566) I cannot refrain from expressing what my feelings dictate. I believe that if the Romans had hesitated to punish these sacrilegious reprobates, either the ground would have opened and swallowed up the city [*c*] or a flood would have swept it away, or it would have been struck by the thunderbolts of the land of Sodom [*c*]. For it produced a generation far more godless than those who perished in this way, a generation whose frenzy brought about the ruin of the whole nation.

7. The myriads of dead in Jerusalem

(567) But why should I describe these calamities individually, for Manneus, son of Lazarus, who fled to Titus in those days told him that through a single gate that had been entrusted to him 115,800 corpses had been carried out between the fourteenth of the month Xanthicus [*a*], the day on which the Romans encamped before the walls [*a*], and the new moon of Panemus [*a*]? (568). All of these were the bodies of the poor; though he had not undertaken this charge himself, he was obliged to keep count, as he accounted for the public funds. The rest were "buried" by their own kin, who merely took them out and threw them clear of the city. (569) This refugee [Manneus] was followed by many distinguished citizens who reported that, in all, 600,000 [*b*] bodies of the lower classes were thrown out through the gates; it was impossible to discover the number of the others [*b*]. (570) They

564[*a*] *Plundering the treasures* Only a Josephus can in such circumstances reproach John for applying the sacred oil and wine to profane purposes. Nevertheless his reaction, as a priest, may be understandable. The Zealots had also appropriated the gold and silver vessels, the precious objects and decorations clearly intended for Temple rites, melted them down, and shared them among themselves. This suggests at the same time that possession of gold was not the exclusive property of the people of Jerusalem, whom the insurgents hounded and dispossessed to maintain their control over the city. Precious metal was a mode of survival for all.

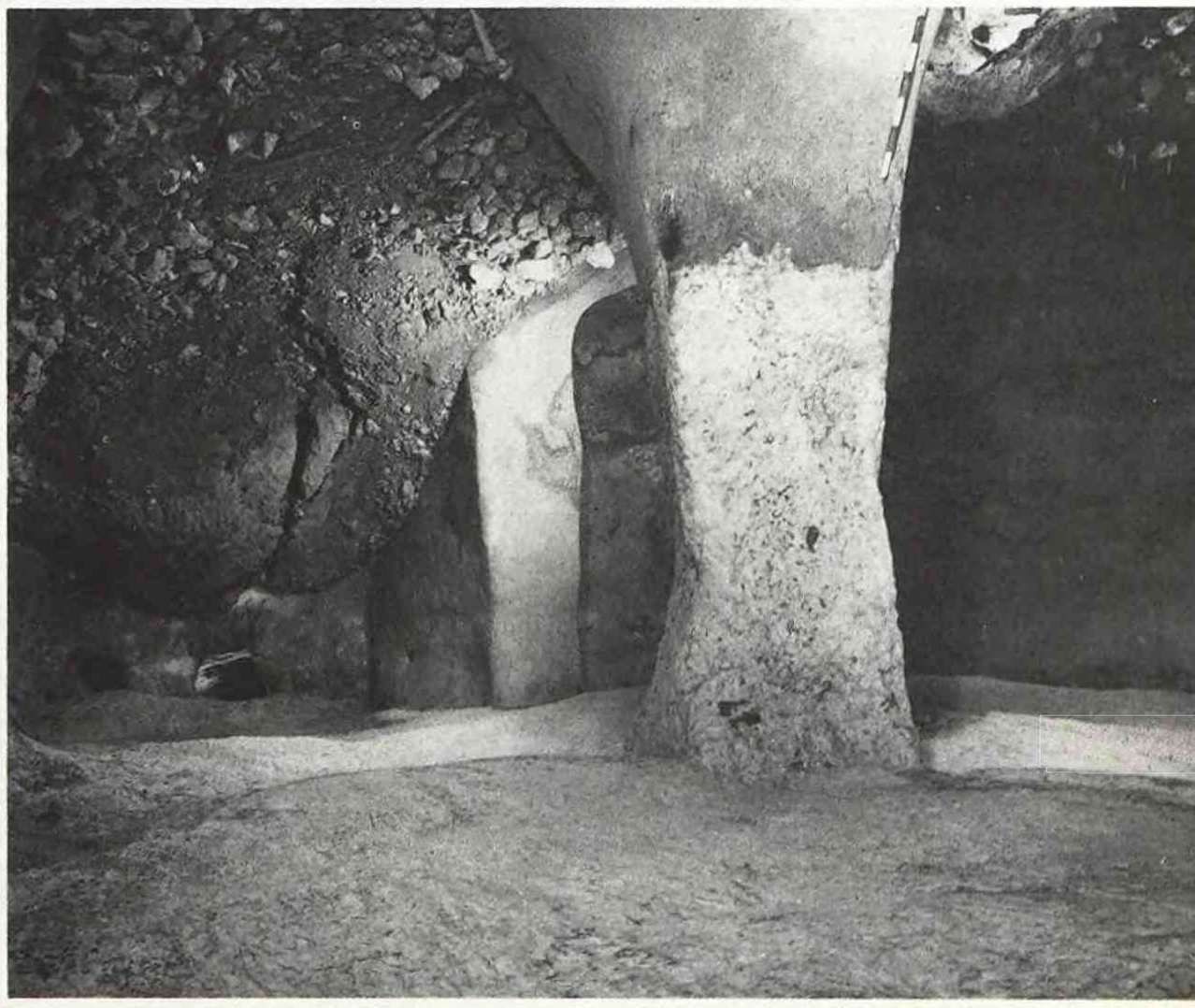
565[*b*] The wine and oil (cf. *Mishna Middot* 2, 6) were stored in "Chambers of the House of Oil" at the southwest of the Women's Court, as shown in our diagram of the Temple courts (facing paras. 207-222).

566[*c*] *Swallowed up the city* (Josephus' blame). Such sacrilege, he argued, surely deserved no less than the historic punishments meted out by God to sinners of yore: as that meted out to Korah (Num. 16, 32), or to the generation of Lot at Sodom. It has been remarked that this seems to contradict an earlier realistic observation (550) that gold had depreciated by about half; nevertheless, the acuteness of the problem suggests that trade in bullion as well as coins was carried out, either clandestinely or openly, inside the city walls, as the ultimate means of survival. On the other hand, the author seems to overlook a weakness in his argument: Jewish law ordains that where life is at stake all prohibitions related to Temple rites can be set aside. We shall revert to the theme of blame in *War* VI, 288 f; 356 f, VII, 263 ff.

567[*a*] *Xanticus* (April), *Panemus* (August).

569[*b*] The figures are a wild exaggeration but clearly reflect the somber tragedy that befell the holy city as a result of the prolonged famine and terror. According to Tacitus (*Hist.* V, 13), Jerusalem's total population during the siege was 600,000—another exaggerated estimate. Modern historians believe that the normal population within the walls, including refugees, could hardly have exceeded 100,000-150,000.

The discovery in 1974 of this largest underground water reservoir in the Upper City was the more unexpected as it is not mentioned in any ancient source



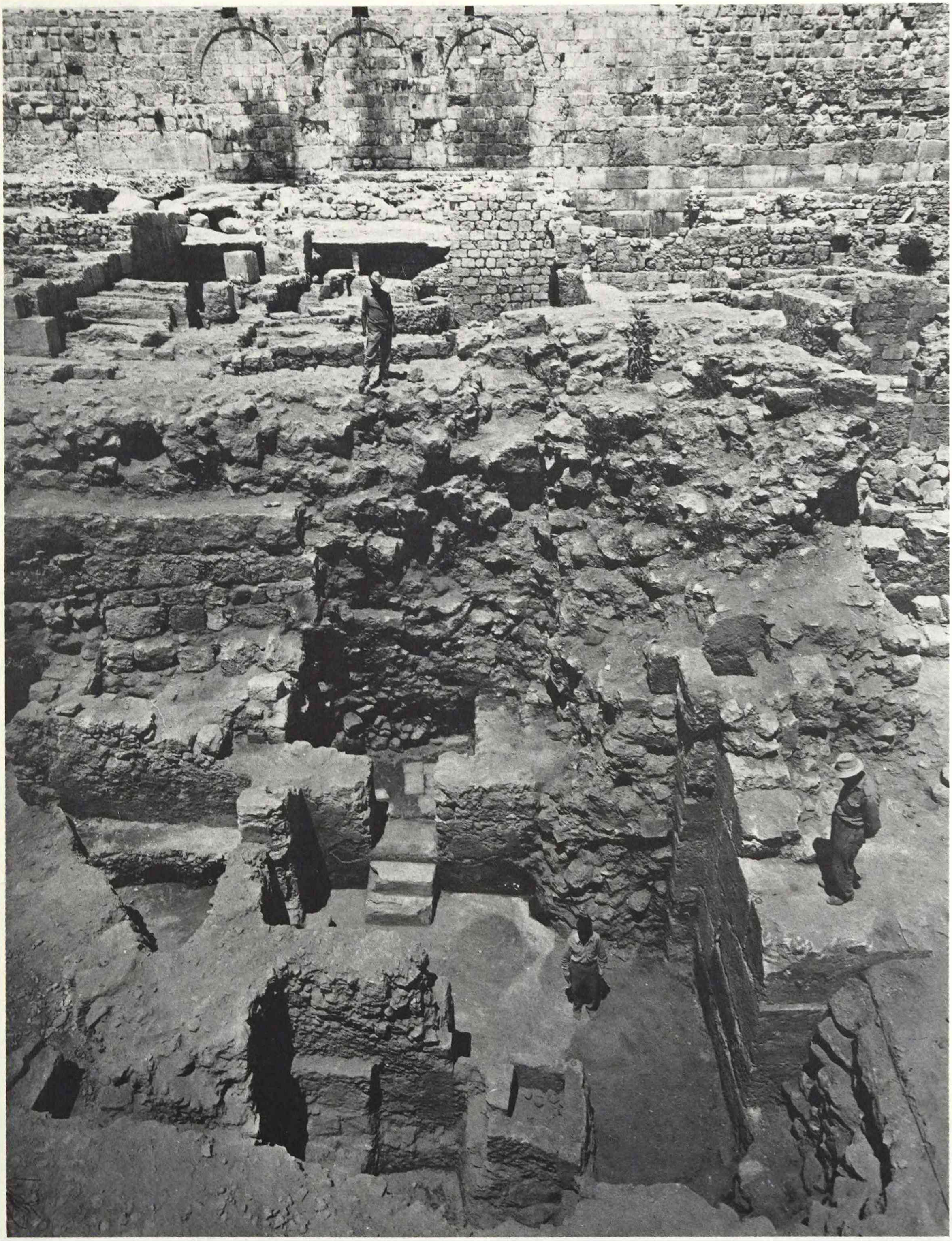
571[*a*] *A talent* was a disc or square of precious metal (bullion) of a specific (in this case undertermined) weight, and worth 3000 silver shekels.

571[*b*] *Herbs* As recently as AD 1948, the beleaguered Jews of Jerusalem, who were besieged by the Jordanian army during the War of Independence, collected and ate the wild "khubezeh" herb which grew abundantly in the yards and fields in and out of town.

571[*c*] "Sewers and dunghills" are probably synonymous with refuse dumps situated near or just outside the gates. It is known that as late as the 19th century AD, i.e. in Turkish times, refuse was dumped over some of the walls of Jerusalem, forming layers several meters deep.

added that when they no longer had the strength to carry out the penniless, they heaped the bodies in the largest houses of the city and locked the doors. (571) Also the price of a measure of wheat was a talent [*a*], and later, when the city was encircled and they could no longer gather herbs [*b*], some were in such dire straits that they searched the sewers and old dunghills [*c*] and ate the refuse they found there so that what once they could not look at now became their food. (572) When the Romans heard all these tales of horror, their compassion was aroused; yet the rebels who saw it all with their own eyes did not relent but allowed these things to come on them too, for they were blind to the doom that was imminent for the city and for themselves.

The lanes strewn with hundreds of dead (see par. 570) bore a close resemblance to those of the Old City. The drawing on the wall depicts the Islamic Dome of the Rock on the home of a Muslim official with a welcome greeting "Ahlan Wasahlan"

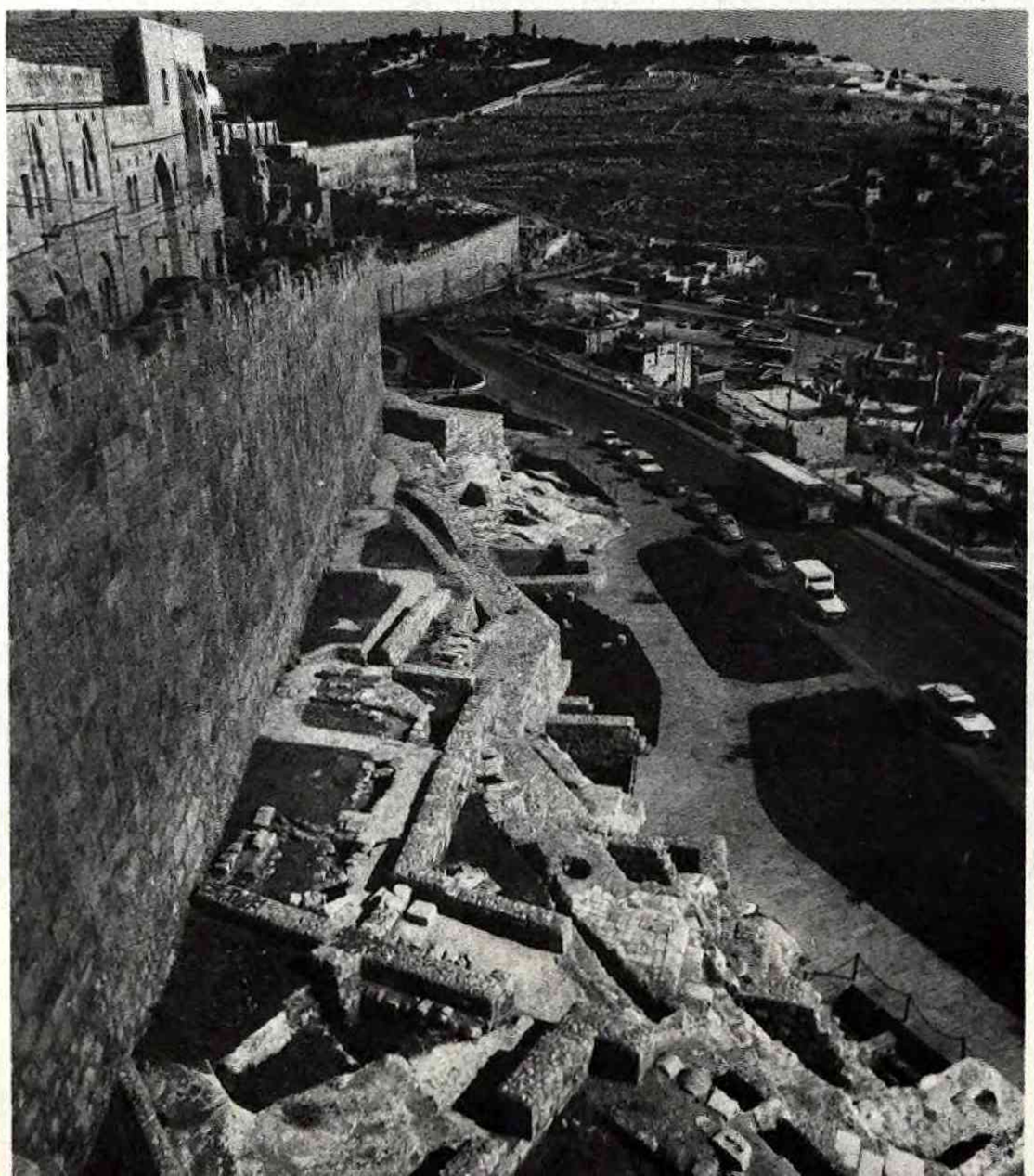


The excavation conducted by B. Mazar south of the Triple Gate (above, and see map on p. 317) have uncovered the mainfold structures built in the area, called the Ophel, during many centuries. They feature varied architectural details and had lain buried underground for nineteen centuries

BOOK VI

4[*a*] *It seems to me* Josephus appears to impute the "rebels" and "bandits" with a distorted relationship to the deity as they reproach Him for His aloofness in their hour of need. However, he also reluctantly calls attention to their invincible courage in paras. 13, 20 and 38 below.
5[*b*] Cf. V, 523. *Earthworks* were outer rough ramparts or broad embankments of rock, earth and wood upon which the Romans placed their artillery or launched an attack.
5[*c*] Ninety furlongs, or approx. 14.5 kms.
7[*d*] *Suburbs* A large suburban area had grown in Second-Temple times beyond the walls of Jerusalem; to the west, around the area now occupied by the dry Sultan pool and the Mamillah pool and the cemetery; to the south, above the Hinnom valley; in the east, the area occupied by the well-watered King's Gardens of old, the village of Siloam above, the slopes and top of the Mount of Olives with nearby settlements like Bethphage (Luke. 19, 29). Bethany (John 11, 1 ff.) and other areas on the high ground of Jerusalem. There some unrecognizable remains attest to the existence of clusters of ancient habitation. The abundant rainfall provided the valleys around Jerusalem with rich flora and growths of pine and cypress (which the Romans used for timber, earthworks and fuel). These suburbs were also of considerable help in housing the tens of thousands of pilgrims who came to Jerusalem once or twice a year and lived under tents or other shelters, for they could not be contained in hostelries and inns of the city proper.
13[*a*] *Fortitude* Dio Cassius calls attention to the depression of the besieging Romans and extraordinary fortitude of the Jews in his *History of Rome* (written in "80 books" about 130 years after Josephus). He relates in XLVI, v that the Jewish belief that God would never allow the city to fall into enemy hands seemed to infect some of the Romans who deserted to the Jews. That some Romans—possibly auxiliaries—went over to the Jews may be inferred even from Josephus, who in *War* V, 268 mentions the fact incidentally and without comment. This conviction, however, was not the only reason for the desertions to the Jews. It would appear that some other—and unknown—factors influenced them, as they fought at their sides and shared their meager rations when famine raged. We have no supplementary data to explain it beyond noting it.

Ancient remains on the slopes of Mount Zion. The wall on the left was built by the Turks fifteen centuries later when they raised the walls of the present Old City. The Mount of Olives appears in the upper background



A. CAPTURE AND DESTRUCTION OF ANTONIA AND SIEGE OF THE TEMPLE

Chapter I

1. The completion of new Roman earthworks; the desolation around Jerusalem

(1) As the days wore on, the sufferings of Jerusalem grew worse, and the rebels were goaded to even greater fury by the successive calamities that engulfed them, while the famine that devoured the people now preyed on the rebels themselves. (2) The piled corpses throughout the city were not only a revolting sight and emitting a pestilential stench: they even obstructed the fighting men as they made their sorties; for, like men advancing over a battlefield littered with the countless dead, they were forced to trample on the bodies. (3) But as they trod them underfoot, they did not shudder, had no pity, and saw no omen for evil to themselves in thus outraging the departed. (4) With hands drenched in the blood of their countrymen, they rushed out to battle with the foreigners, upbraiding the Almighty (so it seems to me [*a*]) for His slowness in punishing them; for it was not hope of victory but despair of escape that now emboldened them for the fight. (5) The Romans, meanwhile, though struggling terribly in collecting the timber, managed to raise their earthworks in twenty-one days, as described before [*b*], having stripped the whole area around the town to a distance of 90 furlongs [*c*]. (6) The countryside, like the city, was a pitiful sight, for where once there had been a multitude of trees and parks, there was now an utter wilderness stripped bare of timber; (7) and no stranger who had seen the old Judaea and the glorious suburbs [*d*] of her capital, and now beheld utter desolation, could refrain from tears or suppress a groan at so terrible a change. (8) The war had blotted out every trace of beauty, and no one who had known it in the past and came upon it suddenly would have recognized the place, for though he was already there, he would still have been looking for the city.

2. The dejection of the Romans

(9) The completion of the earthworks was a source of apprehension to the Romans and Jews alike. (10) The Jews knew that unless they burnt these also, the city would fall. The Romans feared that it would never be taken if the earthworks were destroyed. (11) For there was no more timber, and the soldiers' endurance had been sapped by toil, and their morale corroded by constant reverses. (12) Indeed the disastrous con-

ditions of the city proved more discouraging to the Romans than to the citizens, for they found their opponents not in the least subdued by their severe reverses, (13) while their own hopes were continually frustrated, their earthworks rendered useless by the enemy's stratagems, their engines by the solidity of the walls, their skill challenged in close combat by the daring of their adversaries. But worst of all, they discovered that the Jews possessed a fortitude of soul [*a*] that could surmount factionalism, famine, war, and disasters beyond number. (14) They began to think the impetuosity of these men to be irresistible, and their equanimity in distress invincible; for what would they not endure if fortune favored them, seeing that disasters only whetted their appetite for valor? This is why the Romans strengthened their guard on the earthworks.

3. Failure of the Jewish attack on the earthworks

(15) John's forces in the Antonia, on the other hand, were preparing for eventualities should the wall be demolished; at the same time they attempted an assault on the Roman works before the rams were brought up [*a*]. (16) The attempt was a failure; they advanced, torches in hand, but before nearing the earthworks they lost hope and turned back. (17) For, in the first place, there seemed to be no concerted plan in their design; they dashed out at intervals in small parties, with hesitation and fear—in short, unlike Jews. There was no sign of the national characteristics, boldness, dash, the massed charge, the quick retreat without suffering a hitch. (18) But while their customary vigor was abnormally lacking in their advance, they found the Romans formed up in more massive array than before, (19) with their bodies and armor [*b*] so completely screening the earthworks as to leave no space anywhere for the passage of a firebrand, while every man braced himself to die rather than budge from his post. (20) For apart from the destruction of all their hopes if these works also went up in flames, the soldiers could not bear the thought that the enemy's scheming should invariably triumph over valor, their desperation over arms, their numbers over experience [*c*], and Jews over Romans. (21) Moreover, the artillery rendered assistance by hitting the sallying parties with missiles [*d*]; the fallen held up those immediately behind, and the risk of advancing quenched their ardor. (22) Of those who pushed beyond the range of the missiles, some sped back before coming to close quarters, taking fright at the disciplined and serried ranks of their enemy; others took to flight only when pricked by the javelins.

15[*a*] John strove to attempt the assault formerly carried out by Bar-Giora.

19[*b*] *Bodies and armor* With their mail-clad bodies, thousands of Roman legionaries surrounded the four earth embankments, while the numbers of Jewish attackers were far smaller, as related by Josephus.

20[*c*] *Numbers over experience* The reference to superior Jewish numbers seems like poetic license, for the Zealot defenders were far less numerous than the Roman legions that besieged Jerusalem at this stage.

21[*d*] *Missiles* Long-range stone projectiles thrown by the ballistae (they caused far less damage than explosive projectiles of later centuries).

Ballista *mounted on wheels wound up to throw stone projectile* E. *An engine intended to throw a twenty-pound stone would have a hole of ten digits; a one-hundred-pound stone, one foot and one-and-a-half digits.* (*From Vitrurius,* "Ten Books on Architecture")

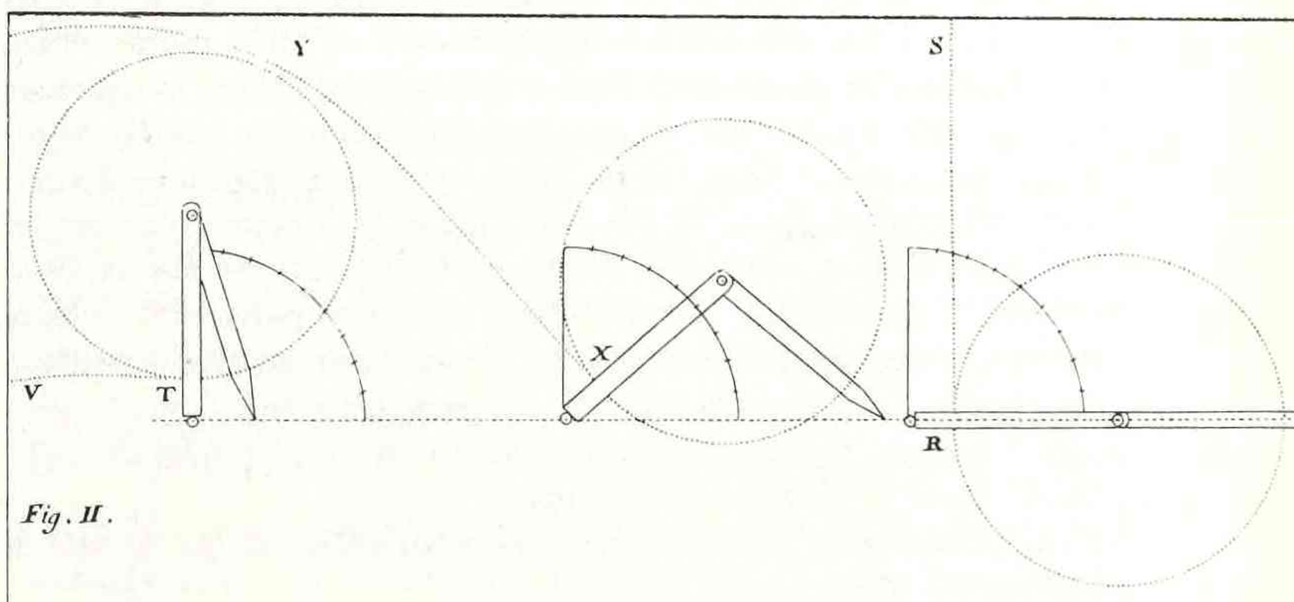
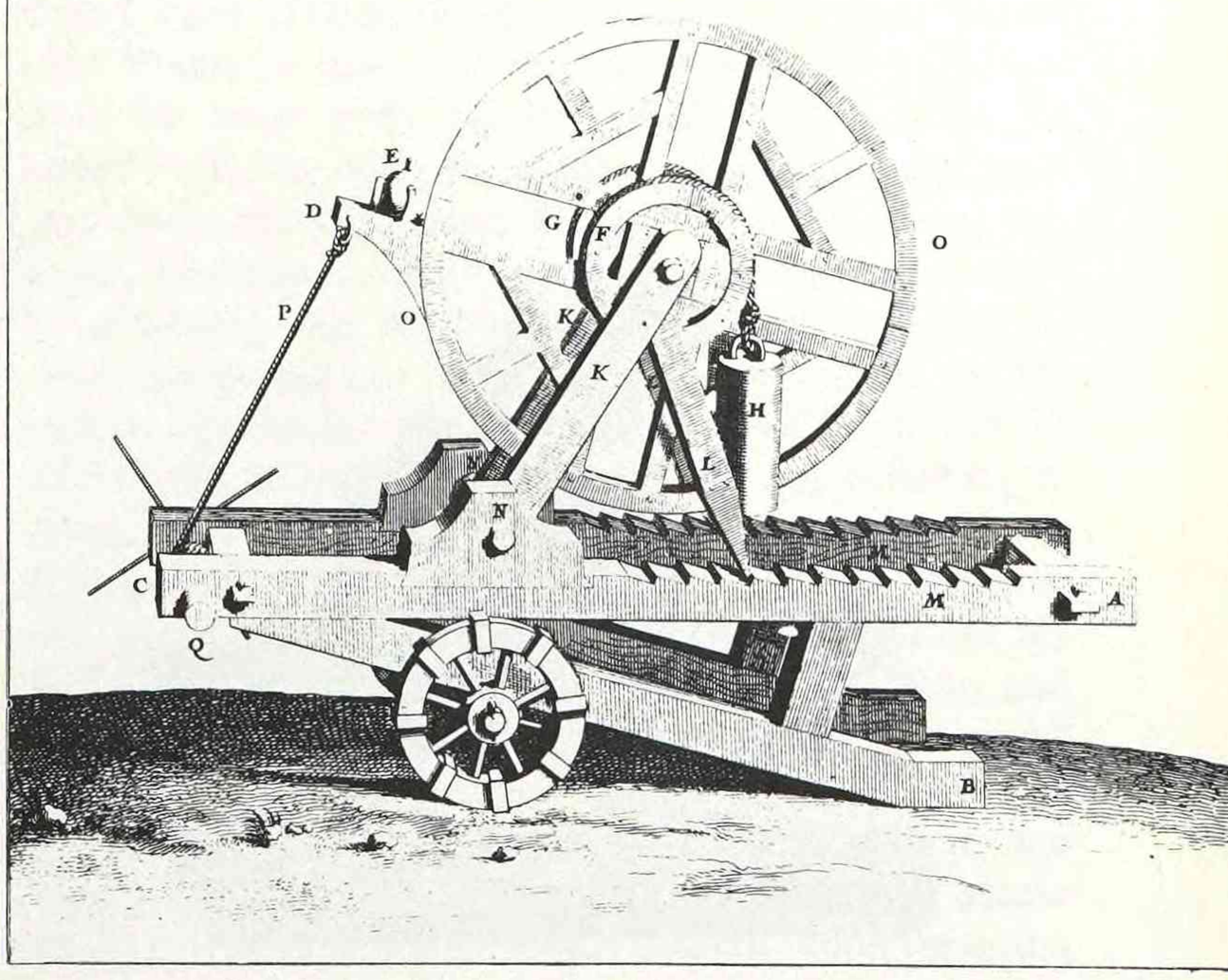


Fig. II.

Fig. I.



At last, reviling one another for cowardice [*e*] they all withdrew without accomplishing anything. (23) The attack took place on the new moon of the month of Panemus [*f*].

The Antonia battered by the Romans

After the Jewish withdrawal, the Romans brought up the siege engines, pelted from the Antonia with rocks, firebrands, iron [*a*], and every weapon with which necessity furnished the Jews; for though they (24) felt sure of their wall and despised the engines, they nevertheless tried to prevent the Romans from bringing them up. (25) The latter, assuming that the anxiety of the Jews to save the Antonia from assault arose from a weakness in the wall, and hoping that the foundations were unsound, redoubled their efforts. (26) Nevertheless, the wall stood up to the battering; but the Romans, under continual fire and undeterred by any danger from above, kept the siege-engines efficiently at work. (27) Since, however, they were awkwardly placed and were crushed by the rocks dropped on them, other men, working under a roof of shields over their bodies, strove with hands and crowbars to undermine the foundations, and by perseverance managed to dislodge four stones [*b*]. (28) Darkness ended the labors of both sides, but in the night, at the place where in his actions against the former earthworks John had undermined the wall, the tunnel caved in, and the wall, already shaken by the siege engines, suddenly collapsed [*c*].

4. Another tunnel discovered behind it

(29) This occurrence had a surprising effect on the spirits of both sides. (30) The Jews, who might have been expected to lose heart, actually had foreseen the collapse and were prepared for it, taking it quite calmly, as the Antonia still remained; (31) whereas the Romans' unanticipated delight at the collapse was dampened by the appearance of another wall that John's men had built within. (32) Certainly, this one appeared easier to assault than the first, as the ascent over it would be facilitated by the ruins; they also imagined the wall itself to be weaker than that of the Antonia, and thought that because it had been erected in an emergency it could be rapidly destroyed. Still, none dared to climb up the breach, for those who led the way would meet with certain death [*d*].

5. Titus' address to his despondent troops

(33) Believing that the ardor of troops is roused most effectively by words of encouragement and that exhortations and promises often make men oblivious of danger and sometimes even contemptuous of death, Titus called the elite of his army and put to the test the mettle of his men. (34) "Fellow soldiers" [*e*] he said, "urging men on to actions involving no risk is a deliberate insult to them, while it is an unmistakable proof of the speaker's unmanliness. (35) Exhortation,

22[*e*] *Cowardice* This attack was an act of desperation, and it failed, as Josephus explains, because it was not carried out with the same vigor as before—the attackers were deterred by fear of extermination—whereas the Romans had redoubled their vigilance. Had they reached the earthworks, they might have frightened the Romans as they had done on former occasions.

23[*f*] Panemus was August, AD 70, or Tammuz in the Jewish calendar.

24[*a*] *Iron,* namely arrow heads thrown by the "scorpions" (catapults).

27[*b*] The four stones were large squared and carved ashlars. To sum up the situation at this point: scarcely had the Jews withdrawn when the battering rams began to pound the wall, although at first with limited success. Nevertheless, the wall was so badly shattered by the blows and earlier operations that it soon afterwards fell of its own accord at the spot where the rams had been at work.

28[*c*] *Collapsed* See V, 469.

32[*d*] Realizing that they had to scale a second wall, the Romans feared that they would meet the calamity that befell them at Gamla (IV, 11-83) as they scaled the Second Wall of Jerusalem (V, 335 ff.).

34[*e*] *Fellow soldiers* In order to assess on literary grounds speeches reported by Josephus, one must bear in mind that in the Greco-Roman golden age, rhetoric was the key to civilized persuasion; and Josephus was addressing that society, as well as a wide Jewish audience.

47[*a*] *Ether* The rarefied element formerly believed to fill the upper regions.

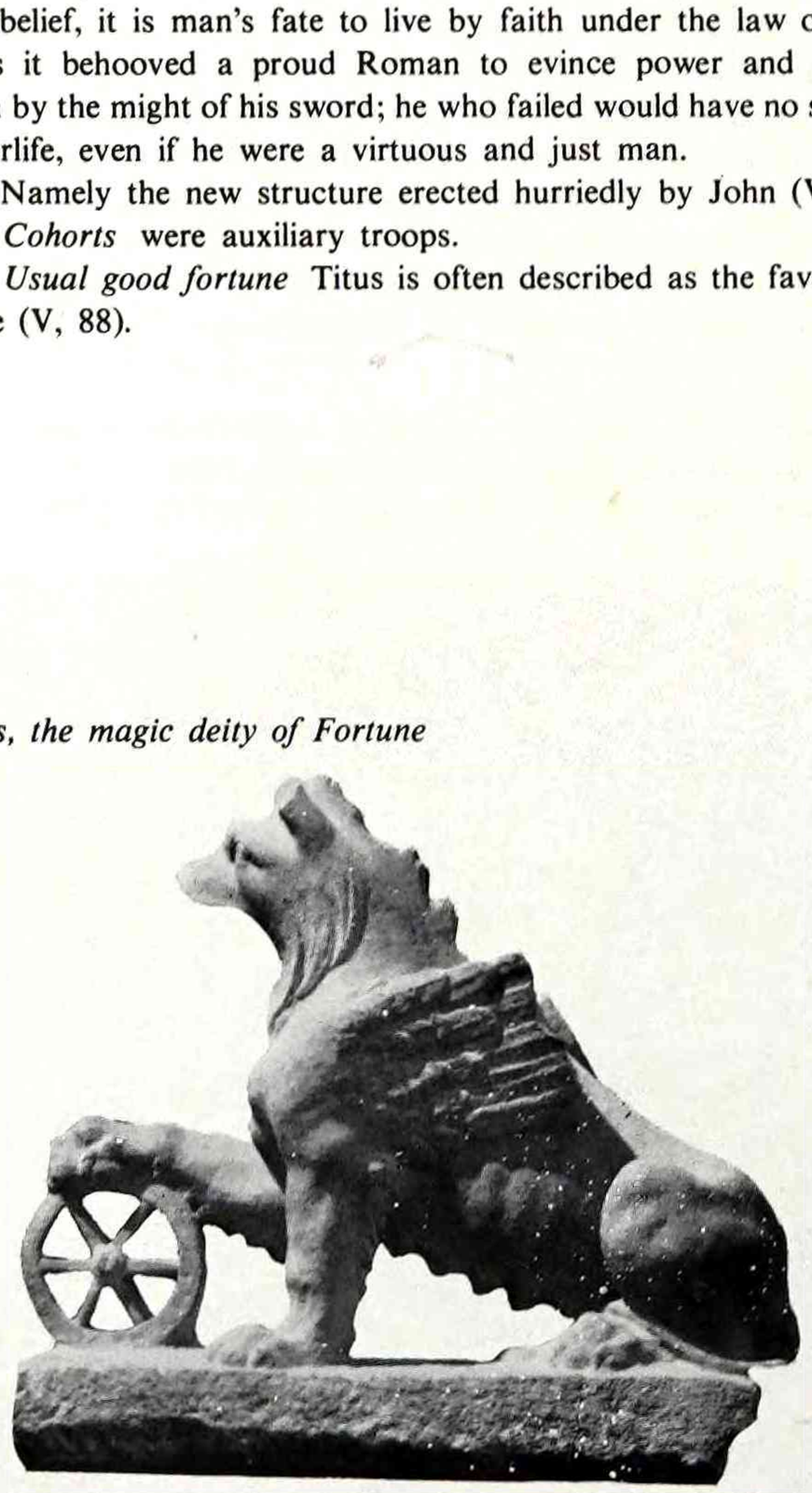
48[*b*] *"Annihilation at one stroke," and promises of the afterlife* Some of Titus' encouraging statements to his soldiers appear as a transparent duplication of Josephus' fervid arguments advanced to his Jewish companions in the cave below Jotapata (III, 351-383). He had promised them the same afterlife—should they choose life, as he advised—and as Titus held out to his soldiers as the reward of valor. Such eternal life—immortality of the soul—was a Greek belief shared by Romans (and by Jews in a different sense). Most Jews believed in a bodily resurrection at the end of days; but the belief was not conditional on the performance of good deeds, as Titus declared to his troops. According to Jewish belief, it is man's fate to live by faith under the law of God; whereas it behooved a proud Roman to evince power and achieve heroism by the might of his sword; he who failed would have no share in the afterlife, even if he were a virtuous and just man.

51[*c*] Namely the new structure erected hurriedly by John (VI, 31).

54[*d*] *Cohorts* were auxiliary troops.

57[*a*] *Usual good fortune* Titus is often described as the favorite of Fortune (V, 88).

Nemesis, the magic deity of Fortune



in my opinion, is needed only for hazardous enterprises, since under other circumstances men may be expected to act of their own accord. (36) I am well aware that the scaling of this wall is arduous, to start with; but the point I wish to make is that to contend with difficulties best becomes those who pride themselves on their courage, for it is glorious to die with honor, and the gallantry of those who lead the way will be amply rewarded. (37) In the first place, then, what might well be a deterrent to some should be an incentive to you. By that I mean the endurance of these Jews and their fortitude in distress. (38) It would be unbecoming for men who are Romans and my own soldiers, men who in peace are trained for war, and through it accustomed to triumph, to be outdone by Jews either in strength or in courage, particularly when victory is in sight and we are enjoying God's assistance. (39) For our reverses are but the result of Jewish desperation, while their sufferings are increased by your valiant exploits and the constant assistance of God. (40) For faction, famine, siege, the fall of the wall when no engine was at work—what else can this mean but a sign of God's anger with them, and the aid He extends to us? (41) So, not only to be outdone by our inferiors but to betray our divine ally would be unworthy of us. (42) It would indeed be a disgrace if Jews—to whom defeat brings no serious discredit, since they have learned to endure slavery—should, in order to end their servitude, despise death and repeatedly sally out into our midst, not in the hope of victory, but merely to prove their courage; (43) and if you, the masters of nearly every land and sea, to whom not to conquer is shameful, should never once attack the enemy directly, (44) but should wait for famine or misfortune to bring them to their knees, sitting idle with such weapons as these, and when at a trifling hazard you have it in your power to achieve all! (45) Indeed, once we are atop the Antonia, the city is at our mercy; for even if there is further fighting within—and I do not anticipate any—your position over their heads, commanding the very air they breathe, would ensure speedy and complete victory. (46) "I do not intend at this moment to sing the praises of death in war and of the immortality reserved for those who fall in the frenzy of battle; but I wish for those who are not so inclined, that they may die in time of peace of disease, condemned body and soul to the grave. (47) For what good soldier does not know that souls set free from the flesh by the sword are given a welcome by that purest of elements, the ether [*a*], and set among the stars; and that as friendly spirits and benevolent heroes they so appear to their own posterity; (48) while souls that waste away in sick bodies, even if they be completely free of stain or pollution, vanish into subterranean gloom and sink into profound oblivion—their life, their bodies, and their memory annihilated at one stroke [*b*]? (49) But if all men are doomed to an inevitable end, and the sword is a kindlier minister of death than any disease, how contemptible it would be not to give to the public service what we must surrender to fate!

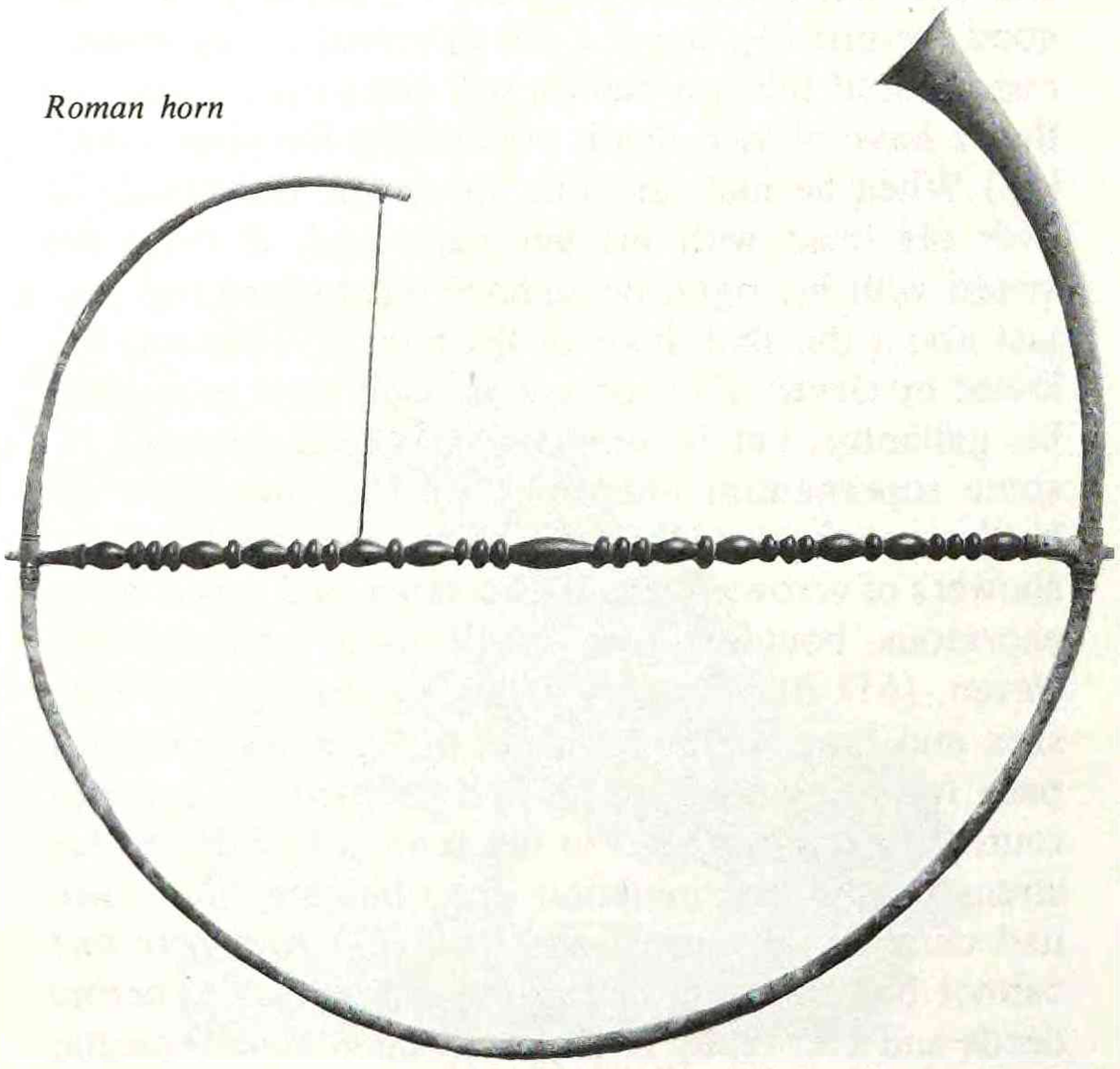
(50) "I have spoken thus far on the assumption that anyone who may make this attempt cannot come through alive; yet it is possible that the valiant may come safely through the very gravest dangers. (51) For, in the first place, the ruined wall will be easy to climb; then, all that has been built up [*c*] will be easy to overthrow. And if more and more of you summon courage for the task and give each other encouragement and support, your determination will soon break the enemy's spirit. (52) It is quite possible that you will win a bloodless victory, if you only begin; for, though they will presumably try to stop your first ascent, yet if you force your way, having come up undetected, their resistance will break down even if only a few of you get there. (53) As for him who leads the assault, I should be ashamed were I not to make him an object of envy when honors are awarded; and while the survivor will command those who are now his equals, the fallen shall receive the blessed merits of valor."

6. The wall scaled by Sabinus

(54) Thus encouraged by Titus's speech, the bulk of the army were still appalled by the gravity of the danger; but among those who served in the cohorts [*d*] was a man called Sabinus, a native of Syria, who proved himself outstanding in prowess and courage. (55) And yet, whoever has seen him before would have concluded from his physical appearance that he was not even an average soldier. His skin was black, his flesh lean and shrunken, but within this frame, far too slender for its own prowess, dwelt a heroic soul. (56) He was the first to spring to his feet, saying, "I readily offer my services, Caesar. (57) I am the first to scale this wall. And I heartily wish that my strength and determination will have the benefit of your usual good fortune [*a*], but if I am thwarted in my efforts, rest assured that my failure will not surprise me, and that I have chosen death voluntarily for your sake." (58) When he had said this, he spread out his shield over his head with his left hand and, drawing his sword with his right, he stepped out toward the wall, just about the sixth hour of the day. (59) He was followed by eleven of the others, the only ones to emulate his gallantry, but he went on far ahead, impelled by some supernatural impulse. (60) The guards on the battlements hurled javelins at them, assailed them with showers of arrows from all directions, and rolled down enormous boulders that swept away some of the eleven. (61) But Sabinus, charging through the missiles and bombarded by arrows, did not slacken his pace for a moment, till he had reached the top and routed the enemy. (62) For the Jews, astounded by his strength and determination and thinking that more had climbed up, turned and fled. (63) And here one cannot but complain of Fortune, so jealous of heroic deeds and ever ready to thwart brilliant achievements;

67[*b*] See 23 [*f*].
68[*c*] *The ninth hour of the night,* or 2 AM.
71[*d*] *Earthworks* See 28 above.
79[*e*] *Seventh hour of the day,* or 2 PM.
80[*f*] *The Antonia* citadel was situated at the northwestern corner of the wide Temple esplanade; hence its possession gave the Romans an unbroken entry to the vast courts surrounding the inner (upper and fortified) sanctuary. The following step was the erection of siege embankments or platforms from which the inner defenses could be battered.
92[*g*] *Sosas,* commander of the Idumaean contingent that marched on Jerusalem (IV, 235).
94[*a*] *The discontinuation of the daily morning and evening perpetual offering, the Tamîd,* happened on the 17th Tammuz according to the Jewish calendar; it was caused by lack of men, as also testified by *Ta'anith* IV, 6: "on seventeen Tammuz the daily offering *Tamîd* ceased." This is listed among the five disasters that took place that day. It was due to the enlistment of all able-bodied priests to the defense, leaving none for the performance of sacrificial duties, which involved the service of many priests and levites. On the other hand, this may have been caused by a shortage of "lambs" as suggested by a corrected Greek text.
95[*b*] *The ultimatum to John of Gischala* When we compare this statement to Josephus' former exhortation and allusions (V, 375 and 444), it becomes evident that Titus' message carried by Josephus must have conveyed an express threat to burn down the Temple unless the Jews surrendered. Josephus conveyed a similar message to the people of Jerusalem at the close of his address (110 below). A Jew and a priest addressing his people could not be more explicit; but the Zealots were not less determined to cling to the belief that the God would not allow the sanctuary to be destroyed by the enemy.

Roman horn



(64) for this brave man, just as he had attained his object, tripped up, and, stumbling over a big stone, fell headlong on top of it with a great crash. The Jews swung round and, seeing him alone and prostrate, pelted him from all directions. (65) However, he got up on one knee and, covering himself with this shield for a time, fought back, wounding many who came near him; (66) but soon, riddled with wounds, his arm was paralyzed and, at length, before breathing his last, he was buried under the missiles. So brave a man deserved a better fate, yet his fall was a fitting end to such an enterprise. (67) Of the others, three who had reached the top were crushed to death with stones, the other eight were dragged down wounded and carried back to camp. These events took place on the third of the month Panemus [*b*].

7. Another successful scaling party

(68) Two days later, twenty of the men guarding the outposts on the earthworks got together and, enlisting the services of the standard-bearer of the fifth legion, two soldiers from the auxiliary cavalry squadron, and one trumpeter, at the ninth hour of this night [*c*] moved forward noiselessly through the ruins to the Antonia; and when they had cut down the first sentries in their sleep, they got possession of the wall and ordered the trumpeter to sound. (69) The other guards instantly leaped to their feet and fled without waiting to see how many had climbed up; for the trumpet-call and the panic led them to imagine that the enemy had ascended en masse. (70) When Caesar heard the signal he quickly called his forces to arms and, with his generals and picked troops, led the way to the top. (71) The Jews had taken refuge in the Temple, and the Romans poured in through the tunnel that John had excavated to reach the Roman earthworks [*d*]. (72) The partisans of both factions, John's and Simon's, drawn up in separate units, blocked their way, displaying prodigious strength and determination, (73) for they were convinced that a Roman entry into the sanctuary meant final capture, while the Romans saw it as the prelude to victory. (74) So a fierce battle was fought at the entrances, the Romans driving on relentlessly to get possession of the Temple, the Jews driving them back toward the Antonia. (75) Arrows and spears were of no use to either side, and both drew their swords and fought hand to hand. In the milling mass it was impossible to tell one side from the other, as the men were locked together inextricably in the confined space, and admidst the noise their shouts fell in confusion on the ear. (76) There was great slaughter on both sides, and the bodies and armor of the fallen were trampled down and crushed by the combatants. (77) Accordingly, whichever way the tide of battle swung, always there followed the cheers of the victors and the groans of the routed. There was room neither for flight nor for pursuit. It was a confused struggle with dubious turns of the scale and

shifting positions, this way and another. (78) Those in front had either to kill or be killed—there could be no retreat; for those in the rear on either side pressed their own men forward and left no intervening space between the opposing lines. (79) At length Jewish fury got the better of Roman skill, and the line began to waver from end to end; for the fight had lasted without a break from the ninth hour of the night to the seventh of the day [*e*]; (80) the Jews in full strength and with the danger of utter defeat as a spur to their valor, the Romans with but a small part of their army, since the legions—whom those actually fighting counted on—had not yet followed them up on the slope. So it was considered sufficient for the present to be in possession of the Antonia [*f*].

8. Another heroic feat

(81) There was a centurion from the Bithynian contingent called Julianus who was a man of note and far more remarkable for skill of arms, physical strength, and intrepidity of spirit than any I had met during that war. (82) When he saw the Romans beginning to give way and putting up a poor defense, he sprang forward—for he stood beside Titus on the Antonia—and singlehanded drove back the already victorious Jews to the corner of the inner Temple. The whole mass fled, regarding such strength and audacity superhuman. (83) As he charged this way and that through their midst as they scattered, he killed all he could reach; never had Caesar witnessed more amazing a sight, nor the other side a more terrifying. (84) Yet, he too was pursued by fate, from which there is no escape for mortal man; (85) he was wearing ordinary military boots thickly studded with sharp spikes, and as he ran across the pavement he slipped and fell on his back with a loud clang of his armor, which made the fugitives turn. (86) A cry of concern for the champion's safety went up from the Romans in Antonia, while the Jews crowding around him aimed blows from all directions with lances and swords. He parried many weapons with his shield. (87) Time after time he tried to stand up but was knocked down by the mass of assailants. Yet, even as he lay prostrate, he stabbed many with his sword. (88) For he would not be quickly dispatched, as he was protected in every vital part by his helmet and breastplate, and kept his head down; but at last, when all his limbs were hacked away, and no comrade dared to come to his aid, he succumbed. (89) Caesar was greatly distressed at the death of so gallant a warrior, butchered too before so many eyes, and though he was anxious personally to come to his aid, he was prevented by circumstances from doing so, while those who might have were too terrified. (90) So Julianus, after a hard fight for life in which he allowed few of those who killed him to go unscathed, died at last, leaving behind him a glorious reputation, not only with the Romans and with Caesar, but even with the foes. (91) The Jews snatched the body and again drove the Romans back, shutting them up inside the Tower Antonia. (92) Those on their side who distinguished themselves in the battle among John's followers were a certain Alexas and Gyphthaeus; among Simon's army were Malachias, Judas son of Merton, and James son of Sosas [*g*], commanding the Idumaeans; and of the Zealots, two brothers, Simon and Judas the sons of Ari.

Chapter II

1. The fall of Antonia and cessation of the daily sacrifices

(93) Titus ordered the soldiers with him to raze the foundations of the Antonia and make the ascent easy for the whole army. (94) Then he was informed that on that day, the seventeenth day of Panemus, because of a lack of men, the perpetual offering to God had been discontinued [*a*], and that the people were consequently in the depths of despair; he then ordered Josephus to repeat to John the same message namely: (95) "If you have a malicious inclination to wage war, you are free to come out with as many men as you wish to fight without bringing destruction on the city and sanctuary [*b*] as well as on yourselves; but you must stop polluting the holy place and sinning against God; moreover, you are free to appoint any Jews you like to offer the discontinued sacrifices." (96) Josephus

Tablet from Heraclea in Bithynia, found in Rome, 2nd century AD

posted himself where he could be heard not only by John but by the multitude and delivered Caesar's address in Hebrew, (97) appealing to them earnestly "to spare the country, to beat out the flames that were already licking at the sanctuary and restore to God the expiatory sacrifices" [*c*]. (98) The people listened to him in silence and utter dejection, but the tyrant poured abuse and imprecations on the head of Josephus, finally stating that "he would never be afraid of capture, since the city was God's." (99) Josephus loudly retorted: "Certainly you have kept it pure for God, and the holy place too remains unpolluted! You have never dishonored your hoped-for ally, and He still receives the customary sacrifices! (100) You godless creature, if anyone deprived you of your daily food, you would regard him as your enemy; and do you believe you can count on God, whom you have denied His everlasting worship, to be your ally in this war? (101) And you blame your sins on the Romans, who respect our laws and are now pressing you to restore to God these sacrifices, which you have interrupted [*a*]. (102) 'Who would not cry and wail for the city at the amazing change, when aliens and enemies atone for your impiety, while you, a Jew, cradled in her laws, are a greater enemy to them than the others.' (103) Yet, consider, John, it is no disgrace to mend your evil ways, even at the last moment [*a*]; (104) and if you really wish to save your country, you have a splendid example before you in Jeconiah, king of the Jews [*b*] who, when the king of Babylon made war on him through his conduct, left the city of his own accord before it was taken, and submitted with his family to voluntary captivity, rather than surrender the holy places and see the house of God go up in flames. (105) For that he is celebrated in the holy scriptures by all Jews, and memory, flowing down the ages and eternally new, immortalizes him to future generations. (106) This, John, is a noble example [*c*], even if it is dangerous! But I can guarantee you even a pardon from the Romans. (107) And remember too, that I who exhort you, am a fellow countryman and advise you as a Jew. It is sensible to consider who is counseling you, and where he comes from. Never, while I live, shall I become such an abject slave as to deny my race or forget my heritage [*d*]. (108) Once more you shout your indignation at me with your loud-mouthed abuse. Indeed, I deserve even harsher treatment for offering advice against fate's decision, and struggling to save men condemned by God. (109) And who does not know the writings of the old prophets and the oracle pronounced against this poor city—now about to be fulfilled? [*e*]. For they foretold that it would fall when someone would begin the slaughter of his own countrymen. (110) Is not the city and the whole Temple area filled with your bodies? Behold it is God, therefore, and no other, who, together with the Romans, is bringing His fire to cleanse the sanctuary [*a*] and to destroy the city that is filled with such great pollution [*b*]."

97[*c*] The daily expiatory sacrifices had been interrupted once for three years by Antiochus IV (cf. *War* I, 32). The present paragraph bears comparison with V, 445, and scholars have noted the mention of the burning of the Temple with the cessation of sacrifices on the 17th of Tammuz. G. Alon believes that this indicates Titus' plan to destroy the Temple long before it was accomplished and that the actual decision depended on the course of events. The discrepancy of time between the 17th of Tammuz and the actual destruction may also suggest the time before the capture of the outer wall and the inner defenses of the sanctuary.

101[*a*], 103[*a*] Josephus' oration was intended to meet the critical situation, namely, the Roman proposal of the evacuation of the sanctuary to allow the renewal of sacrifices.

104[*b*] *Jeconiah,* or Jehoiachin, had succeeded to the throne of Judah at the age of eighteen during the Babylonian attack on Jerusalem. He reigned for only three months and ten days before capitulating to Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 24, 2) and was taken to exile in Babylonia, remaining in detention until 561 BC, when he was released (II Kings 24, 5; II Chron. 36, 8-10). Official Babylonian clay tablets, recording his maintenance at the expense of the royal court, have been discovered. One of the gates of the inner courts of the Second Temple was named after him in commemoration of the young king's patriotism.

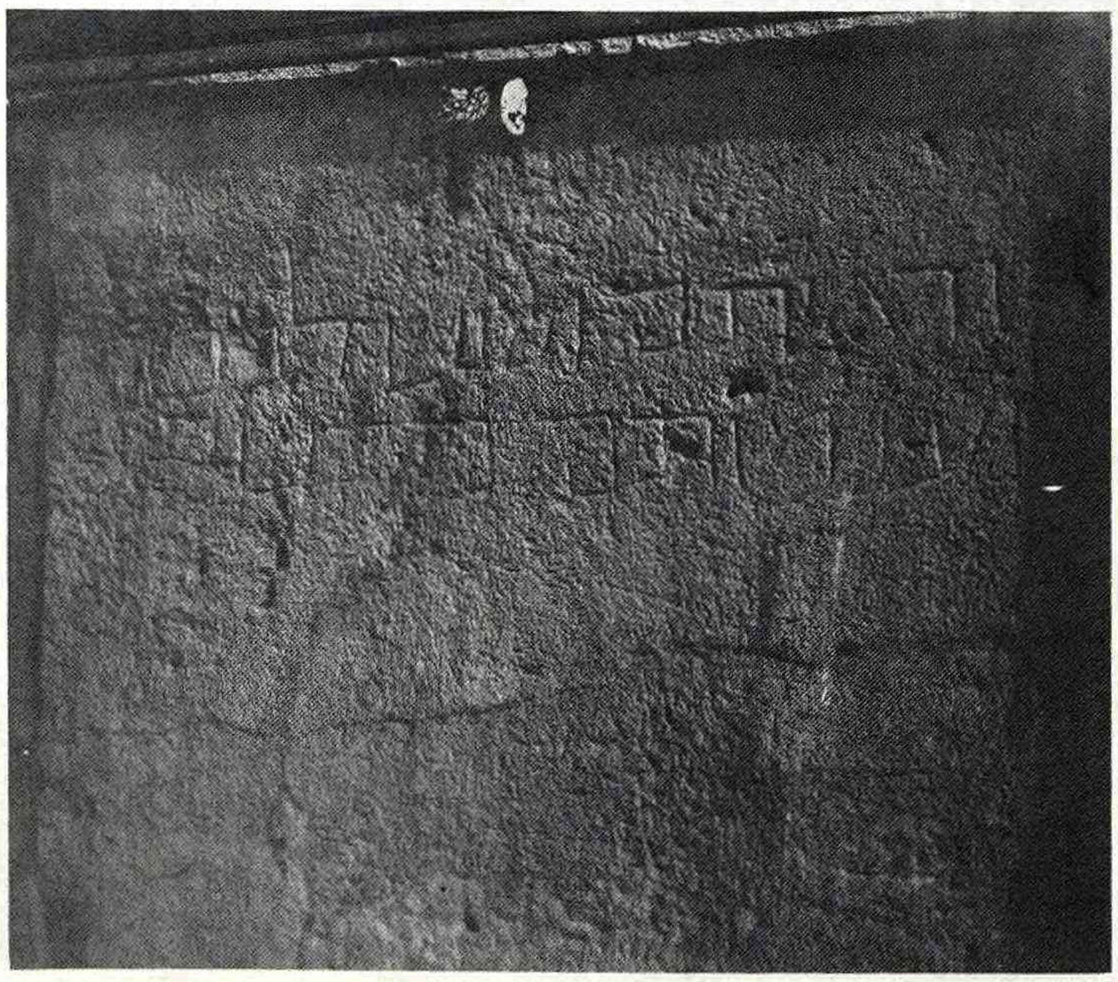
106[*c*] *Noble example* It would appear that Josephus hoped to win John over by flattering allusions and comparison with Jehoiachin.

107[*d*] Josephus seems to refer obliquely to his own behavior while he rejects the accusations the Zealots leveled against him, declaring him a traitor or even a denouncer of his faith.

109[*e*] *The oracle of the prophets* Mainly Jeremiah, referring possibly to chs. 21-34 or 39.

110[*a*] *Cleanse the sanctuary* This terrible prediction may echo Josephus' fear that Titus in his anger would destroy both Jerusalem and the Temple. Quite apart from this, we find a threat in former passages of Josephus, as well as two versions of *Avot de Rabbi Nathan,* quoting the language used by the pacifist Rabbi *Johanan ben Zakkai,* who, before his flight from the beleaguered city, said to the people of Jerusalem: "My sons, why are you destroying the city and seeking to burn the Temple...?" Other accounts of the disaster intimate that the fate of the sanctuary is bound up with that of the city and imply that they were subject to the same sentence in the eyes of the Romans.

Pious wishes of early Jewish pilgrims for the ruined Temple and Jerusalem, couched in verses of the prophet Isaiah, were scratched near the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount walls. They were discovered in the course of recent excavations



2. The desertion of notables

(111) As Josephus spoke thus, with groans and tears, his voice broke down with sobs. (112) Even the Romans were moved by his distress and admired his determination; but John's men were the more incensed with the Romans and eager to get hold of Josephus. (113) However, many citizens of the upper class were moved by this address. Some of them were too frightened of the partisan guards to move, though they had given up themselves and the city for lost; but there were others who, watching their opportunity to escape, sought asylum with the Romans. (114) Among them were the high priests Joseph and Jesus and several sons of high priests, namely three sons of Ishmael who was beheaded in Cyrene, four of Matthias and one of another Matthias [*a*]. This man had run away after the death of his father who had been murdered with three sons by Simon son of Giora, as explained above [*b*]. Many other citizens of good family went over with the high priests. (115) Caesar received them with all possible kindness and, realizing that foreign customs would make life distasteful for them, he sent them to Gophna [*a*] and ordered them to remain there for the time being [*a*]; he even promised to return every man's possessions as soon as he could after the war. (116) So they retired willingly and with complete confidence to the little town that was allotted to them; but when no more was seen of them, the rebels again spread the rumor that the Romans had slaughtered the fugitives, obviously in the hope of deterring the rest from running away. (117) The stratagem succeeded for a time, as it did in the first instance [*b*], and the men refrained from deserting out of fear.

3. The refugees' appeal to their countrymen to surrender

(118) But when these men were brought back by Titus from Gophna and ordered to go around the wall with Josephus to show themselves to the people, great numbers went over to the Romans. (119) All the fugitives joined together and, standing before the Roman lines, wept and wailed as they besought the rebels, as their safest course, to let the Romans into the city and save their country; (120) or, failing that, to withdraw at least from the elevated Temple and save the treasured sanctuary, since the Romans would never bring themselves, unless they were compelled, to burn down the holy place [*c*]. (121) This appeal provoked a violent reaction; the rebels replied by hurling abuse at the deserters and set in line, above the sacred gates, dart-throwers [*a*], catapults, and stone-throwers [*b*], so that the Temple courts became littered with the multitude of the dead like a vast graveyard, and the higher Temple itself was transformed into a fortress. (122) Armed, they poured into the sacred, untrodden precincts, their hands still dripping with the blood of their countrymen; they proceeded to such lengths of crime that the indigna-

110[*b*] *Great pollution* It is a patent fact that the Jewish sages ascribed the destruction of the Temple to "ceaseless inner hatred." But, like the ancient prophets, they too regarded the disaster as a punishment from heaven and did not try to exculpate the enemy, as Josephus seems to have done. Opinion is divided on this point, frequent allusions have been made to Josephus' divided loyalties between his own people and his Roman captors and patrons on the one hand (as when he is compared to a "prophet weeping to himself" like Jeremiah), and, on the other hand, his insistence on blaming the destruction on the Zealots, whom he even accused of eating the holy food of the Temple, as well as using the Temple vessels to further their war (V, 8, 38, 562), quite oblivious of the standing rabbinical injunction that when life is at stake, all such prohibitions are set aside. Josephus' outburst in this instance may have been an attempt to give clandestine expression to his residual national and moral feelings, which were apparently submerged in his servile attitude to his captors and patrons in Rome (cf. further comments in 228[*a*] below).

114[*a*] The high priests, related to Matthias, one of whom could be identified with Matthias son of Boethus and the second with Matthias-ben Theophilus, who was popular with the people, though his sons were put to death by Simon-ben-Giora. Another high priest in this category is a certain Levi mentioned in the Oxyrhincus papyrus (from the district of Fayum in Egypt, the seat of a Jewish community living in their own distinct quarter), or the high priest Aqabiah, whose name appears on one of the ostraca (written shards) discovered at Masada. Several other personages mentioned in Talmudic lore do not seem to throw further light on the subject.

114[*b*] Cf. V, 527-531.

115[*a*] *Gophna* is twelve miles north of Jerusalem. That Vespasian set aside this town for fugitive priests (and notables) is confirmed in Talmud *Berakhot* 44a and Palest. Talmud *Ta'anit* IV, 68a. Cf. *War* I, 45, 222; II, 568; III, 55; IV, 551; V, 50.

117[*b*] *"The first instance"* — when the Zealots' strategy succeeded in preventing Jewish refugees in Jerusalem from deserting and going over to the camp of the enemy — is described in the story of the crucifixion of the fugitives in V, 450 ff.

120[*c*] This issue is discussed in note 110[*a*] above.

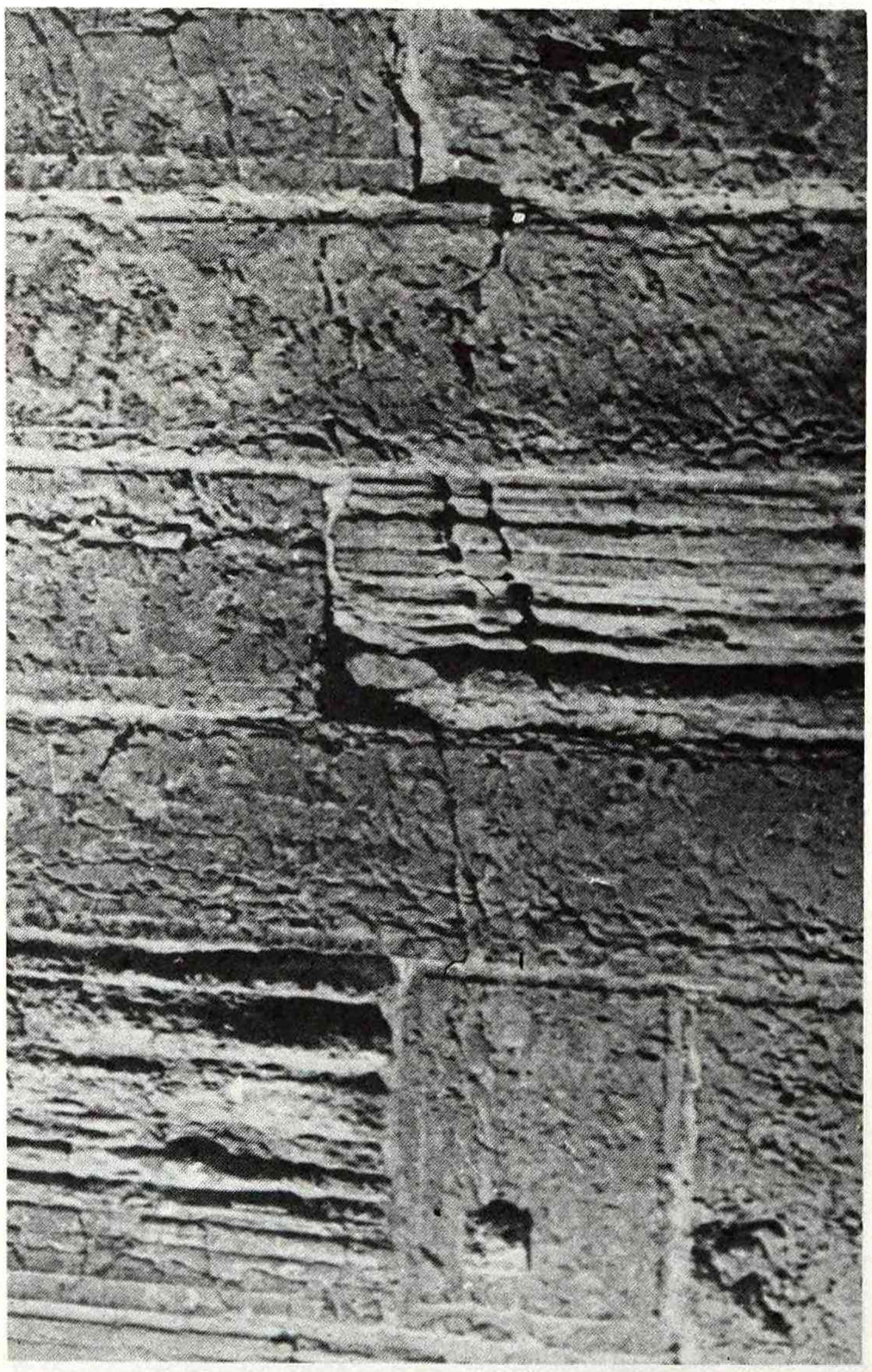
121[*a*] Namely "scorpions."

121[*b*] Namely "ballistae."

Life in Jerusalem was confined within narrow and steep alleys

125[*a*] The balustrade and barrier described in V, 193 ff.
126[*b*] The holy place inside the barrier which was forbidden to Romans, on threat of death, was now used by the rebels to do anything they wished. Hence Titus' anger. Josephus' intercalation of the short speech of Titus at this point may indicate that the Romans' second attempt to capture the Temple was made near to the 17th day of Tammuz (Panemus), or before he started erecting his new embankments or earthworks, or concurrently with this, as will be described below (149[*b*]-150[*d*]).
129[*a*] *Tyrant* (*tyrannos* in singular) John of Gischala who commanded the Zealots defending the Temple stronghold and Jerusalem's eastern ramparts (see map of the siege).
131[*b*] Hundred, from *hekatontarchias,* meaning the pick of every hundred.
131[*c*] Cerealius had distinguished himself in Vespasian's campaigns in Judaea and Samaria (III, 310, 314; IV, 552). The soldiers under his command attacked an hour before sunrise.
142[*a*] *Fought gallantly* It appears that Titus' second attempt to storm the Temple area took place before the 17th of Tammuz (August) after which he began raising the embankments against the outer walls of the Temple area; or this may have occurred during the early stage of the operation.
143[*b*] Cf. 129[*a*].
148[*c*] *Acatelas* is identified with Caathas (IV, 271 and V, 249).

The Jews were constantly beguiled by their blind trust in the huge walls and ramparts of the city



tion the Jews might well have felt if the Romans had committed such outrages against them, was now felt by the Romans against the Jews who had profaned their own holy place. (123) Every one of the soldiers was filled with reverent awe when his eye rested on the Temple, and everyone prayed that the brigands would relent before all was lost.

4. Titus' vain appeal

(124) Greatly distressed, Titus again reproached John and his supporters: "You rotten wretches, was it not you who set up the balustrade to guard your sanctuary? (125) Did you not put up at intervals along it slabs inscribed in Greek characters and our own, forbidding anyone to go beyond the barrier [*a*]? (126) And did we not give you leave to execute anyone who did go beyond it, even if he were a Roman? Why then, you guilty men, are you now trampling dead bodies inside it [*b*]? Why do you desecrate the Temple with foreign blood and your own? (127) I call on the gods of my fathers to witness and any god that ever protected this place—I doubt that there is one now—I call on my army, on the Jews in my camp, and on you yourselves as witnesses that I am not compelling you to desecrate your Temple. (128) If you change the battle-ground, no Roman will go near your holy places or violate them. I will protect the Temple for you even if you do not wish me to."

5. Titus' observation of the Roman night attack from the Antonia

(129) As Josephus broadcast this message on Caesar's behalf, the brigands and their tyrant [*a*], who assumed that cowardice lurked behind these exhortations, received them with insolent scorn. (130) When Titus saw that these men had neither mercy on themselves, nor any concern for the Temple, he resumed hostilities, though unwillingly. (131) He could not bring up his whole army against them due to the limited space at his disposal; so he picked thirty of the best soldiers out of every hundred [*b*] and, entrusting a tribune in charge of every thousand, placed the entire force under Cerealius' high command with orders to attack the guardposts about the ninth hour of that night [*c*]. (132) He was himself in arms and ready to go down with them but was held back by his friends because of the serious danger involved and because the officers insisted that (133) he would do more good by remaining inside the Antonia in control of his troops' operations than by going down into the forefront of the battle. For if Caesar would watch them, every man would behave most valiantly. (134) Caesar yielded to this persuasion, telling his men that his only reason for staying behind was to judge their exploits, so that no brave man should remain unnoticed or unrewarded, nor any coward go unpunished, for he, as a spectator and eyewitness of every deed, would be empowered both to punish and to reward. (135) He thereupon sent them to their task

at the hour mentioned, then moved up to a suitable forward observation post in the Antonia, anxiously awaiting the outcome.

B. THE BATTLE OVER THE TEMPLE MOUNT

6. A drawn battle

(136) The task force did not find the guards of the Temple asleep, as they had hoped, for as they sprang up with loud yells, a hand-to-hand struggle instantly began. When the warnings of the guards were heard within the courts, the rest of the defenders poured forth en masse. (137) The Romans stood their ground under the onslaught of the leading ranks; but those who followed them collided with their own troops and many treated their own soldiers as foes; (138) for they could not distinguish one another by voice due to the confused hubbub, nor could they make out their faces, as it was still night; moreover, they were so blinded either by exasperation or by fear that they struck out at everyone who crossed their path. (139) The Romans interlocked their shields and charged by their units, thus sustaining smaller losses from this confusion; moreover each man remembered the password. (140) The Jews on the other hand were continually scattering their efforts, attacking and retreating haphazardly, often mistaking each other for enemies. Anyone who moved to the rear in the dark was mistaken by his friends for an advancing Roman. (141) In fact, more were wounded by their own comrades than by the enemy, until day broke and they could see how the battle was going and distinguish between friend and foe. Separating into their opposing formations, they used their javelins and maintained their defense in orderly engagement. (142) Neither side yielded or showed any sign of weariness. The Romans, knowing that Caesar was watching, vied with each other individually and in their units, each confident that his promotion would date from that very day, provided he fought gallantly [*a*]. (143) The Jews had as the arbiter of their prowess the fear for their lives and for the Temple, as well as the ever-present tyrant [*b*] who stood over them, rousing them to action, some with encouragement, others by threats or the lash. (144) The fight was mainly of stationary nature and confined in a narrow space [of a furlong], the maneuvers flowing very slightly and rapidly to and fro; flight and pursuit were alike impossible for both sides in the restricted space. (145) Every event was accompanied by corresponding shouts from the Antonia. When their own men were stronger, they cheered them to keep courage, and they urged them to stand fast at every retreat. (146) It was like a battle fought in a theater, and no detail of this fight could be concealed either from Titus or his staff. (147) At last after this engagement, which opened at the ninth hour of the night and came to an end after the fifth hour of the day, neither side had hardly driven the other from the spot where the conflict began, and no decisive victories had been won. (148) On the Roman side many had fought magnificently; of the Jews—in Simon's contingent—Jude son of Mareotes, and Simon son of Hosaias; of the Idumaeans, James and Simon, the latter the son of Acatelas [*c*], the former of Sosas; of John's contingent, Gyphthaeus and Alexas, and of the Zealots, Simon son of Ari.

The green timberland situated west of Jerusalem supplied the Roman requirements

149[*a*] The "intervening period" was the week before Titus raised the embankments, after the 17th of Tammuz.

149[*b*] *A broad causeway leading to the Temple* The Temple esplanade formed a fairly wide rectangle surrounded by and fortified by stout supporting walls. It had already been invaded through the Antonia. Further in, the higher Temple platform formed a fairly regular square surrounded by the sturdy walls which supported the inner Ḥēl elevated platform inside of which ran colonnades. Its height, according to Josephus, was 40 cubits (approx. 20 m.). Around it ran the bulwark, or rampart, 14 cubits (7 m.) wide. A flight of stairs led down from it to the outer courts (B. Mazar, p. 118). This inner area with its inner forecourt formed a second line of defense and offered safety to the besieged even after the loss of the outer walls and the esplanade. Now that the Antonia defenses had been breached, Titus broke through a wide swath in the ruins toward the esplanade. But he also needed to secure control of the other outer supporting walls of the esplanade from additional areas of access, chiefly the east and west.

150[*c*] *The First Wall* was the oldest stout wall of the city. It protected both the city and the Temple Mount area on the east as shown in the map. The irrupting Roman army moved also in that direction, as indicated by the arrow pointing toward the words "Tammuz 24-26" (August).

150[*d*] *Inner Temple* Various siege embankments were raised against the First Wall (east of the above arrow) and they now stood opposite the northwest corner of the higher platform described in 149[*b*].

150[*e*] *The northern portico... two gates,* namely the portico (whose exact nature is not clear) situated inside and running parallel to the outer protective walls of the Temple Mount. This suggests the existence of two gates in its Northern Wall, as explained below.

150[*f*] *Two gates* This statement by Josephus raises serious problems of interpretation. *Mishna Middot* I, 3 knows of one gate, the *Taddāy gate* located in the Northern Wall. This gate did not have considerable traffic. But Josephus clearly asserts there were two gates, and he was a contemporary witness, whereas the *Mishna* dates to a few generations later and cannot be regarded as an eyewitness report. B. Mazar, who has conducted extensive excavations at the foot of the Temple Mount (1968-1978), explains the contradiction as follows: Josephus lays stress on the topography of the Temple Mount and naturally referred to familiar sites. The *Mishna's* object, on the other hand, was to immortalize the ceremonial rites and the routine of the Temple. (Accordingly, the *Mishna* references cannot be regarded as a safe guide for topography.) It referred, for instance, to the two closely-situated southern gates of the Temple Mount as the "Hulda Gates," while regarding them as one entity, because one gate served as entry and the other as exit. Its enumeration of the other gates of the Temple Mount was generally different from Josephus' because of a difference in approach. The Northern gate, or Taddāy gate, was apprently singled out in the *Mishna* because it led to a subterranean passage used by the priests to reach the underground areas of the Temple. Another northern gate, if any, may have served as an exit. Other topographical surveys made in the past hundred years may throw further light on the subject of the northern precincts as these observations were made by the early archaeological investigators of the Temple Mount, namely Charles Warren and Charles Wilson of the Palestine Exploration Fund about a hundred years ago, and those of Conrad Schick, the German architect in residence in the early years of the 20th century. Their accurate diagrams and stratigraphic charts of the wide esplanade and its mysterious underground reservoirs and chambers (drawn when they were privileged, during Turkish times, to explore at liberty) may throw some light on the subject (see diagram of the esplanade and location of its underground structures). In referring to these early explorations, the present editor remarks: "Four reservoirs are situated along the northern wall of the enclosure (of Temple Mount). Two of them, 16-17 in the diagram, supported by huge pillars and vaults, form two stories and are accessible by a walled-up stairway. They are connected with Birket Isrāīn (Pool of Israel), a rectangular reservoir 100 × 40 m. that used to serve as a moat... . The vault at its northwestern end is part of the old Antonia compound masonry..." (G. Cornfeld, *The Mystery of the Temple Mount,* pp. 45, 89). Farther east along the northern outer wall the remnants of a Herodian tower are still extant, as illustrated in *War* I, but its place in the siege of the Temple Mount is not known.

7. A wide path cut to the Temple; new embankments raised opposite the esplanade

(149) In the intervening period [*a*], the rest of the Roman army had in one week overthrown the foundations of the Antonia and prepared a broad causeway leading to the Temple [*b*]. (150) As the legions came closer to the First Wall [*c*], they began to raise their embankments. One faced the northwest corner of the inner Temple [*d*]; the other rose over against the northern portico [*e*] situated between the two gates [*f*]; (151) then two more, one opposite the western portico of the outer court [*g*] of the Temple, the other farther out opposite the northern portico [*h*]. The progress of the work, however, cost them considerable toil and sweat as they had to fetch the timber from a distance of a hundred furlongs [*i*]. (152) They were occasionally victims of Jewish stratagems as their overwhelming superiority made them less careful, just as despair of escape made the Jews more daring than ever. (153) Thus, some of the cavalry, every time they went out to collect wood or fodder, let the horses graze while they wandered off foraging [*a*] without holding onto their bridles; (154) whereupon the Jews in sudden sorties seized the horses and carried them off. This happened so repeatedly that Caesar, correctly concluding that these losses were due less to the courage of the Jews than to his men's negligence, decided by an angry measure to make the rest take better care of their horses in the future. (155) He ordered one of the soldiers who had lost his horse to be executed, thus frightening the others into saving theirs. They did not let them graze any longer, but took them all on their expeditions, clinging to them as if the horse and rider were one. (156) So the assault on the Temple and the erection of the embankments continued unabated [*b*].

8. The Roman camp on the Mount of Olives attacked by the Jews

(157) The very day after the Roman ascent many of the rebels, who with their loot failing them, were hard pressed by hunger, joined forces and attacked the Roman posts on the Mount of Olives [*c*] around the eleventh hour of the day [*d*], hoping they would catch them off guard at this time while they were busy refreshing themselves [*d*] and thus break through without difficulty. (158) But the Romans, who saw them coming instantly closed in from neighboring guard-posts and prevented them from scaling the camp wall or cutting their way through. (159) A fierce struggle ensued, marked by feats of courage on both sides; the Romans displaying skill combined with strength, the Jews fired by reckless impetuosity and uncontrollable rage. (160) One side was urged on by shame, the other by necessity; it seemed an appalling disgrace to the Romans to let the Jews slip out of the net that, as it were, enveloped them; while their enemy's one hope of survival was to break through the wall. (161) A mounted man named Pedanius, who was

from a cohort, seeing the Jews at last routed and driven down into the valley, urged his horse at top speed along their flank, and snatching up one of the enemy as he fled—a young man of sturdy build and in full armor too—seized him by the ankle, (162) so far did he lean over from his horse, as he galloped, thus displaying magnificent muscular strength of arm and body combined with consummate horsemanship. (163) Then, as if he had captured a precious treasure, he rode off with his prize to Caesar. Titus congratulated the captor on his amazing feat and ordered the man who had been caught to be punished for his part in the assault on the wall; he then turned all his attention to the battle for the Temple and the accelerated erection of the siege embankments [*a*].

9. The burning of the portico

(164) The Jews suffered so severely in the engagements, as the war slowly but steadily rose to a climax and crept closer to the sanctuary, that they decided to sever, as from a gangrenous body, the affected limbs so as to prevent the spread of the disease. (165) They set on fire the portion of the portico facing northwest, which was connected with the Antonia, and then hacked away about 20 cubits [*b*], thus

151[*g*] *Opposite the western portico of the outer court* The siege embankments here were intended to reinforce the western flank of the Roman storming force. The ancient high porticoes have been replaced since Islamic times by lower and more modest porticoes, but they seem to suggest the symmetry of the ancient esplanade.

151[*h*] *Further out...* The Herodian northern porticoes spanned practically the entire northern end of the esplanade, running parallel and close to the outer walls of the Temple Mount. This site was replaced in medieval times by ornate "madrasas" (Muslim theological colleges) and other structures, which reach as far as the ancient northwestern porticoes, once linked with the Antonia (cf. text 164 below).

151[*i*] *A hundred furlongs* A little over 20 km. or a five-hours' journey.

153[*a*] *Foraging* This favors the assumption that the Jews who carried off the horses managed to steal across the dike or circumvallation that the Romans had raised around Jerusalem, and apparently guarded by their cavalry.

156[*b*] *Unabated* The breach of the Antonia that the Romans had made, breaking through to the northwestern end of the esplanade, reduced the Jewish mobility to a minimum and prevented the insurgents from sneaking out of the area to forage for "loot" or food.

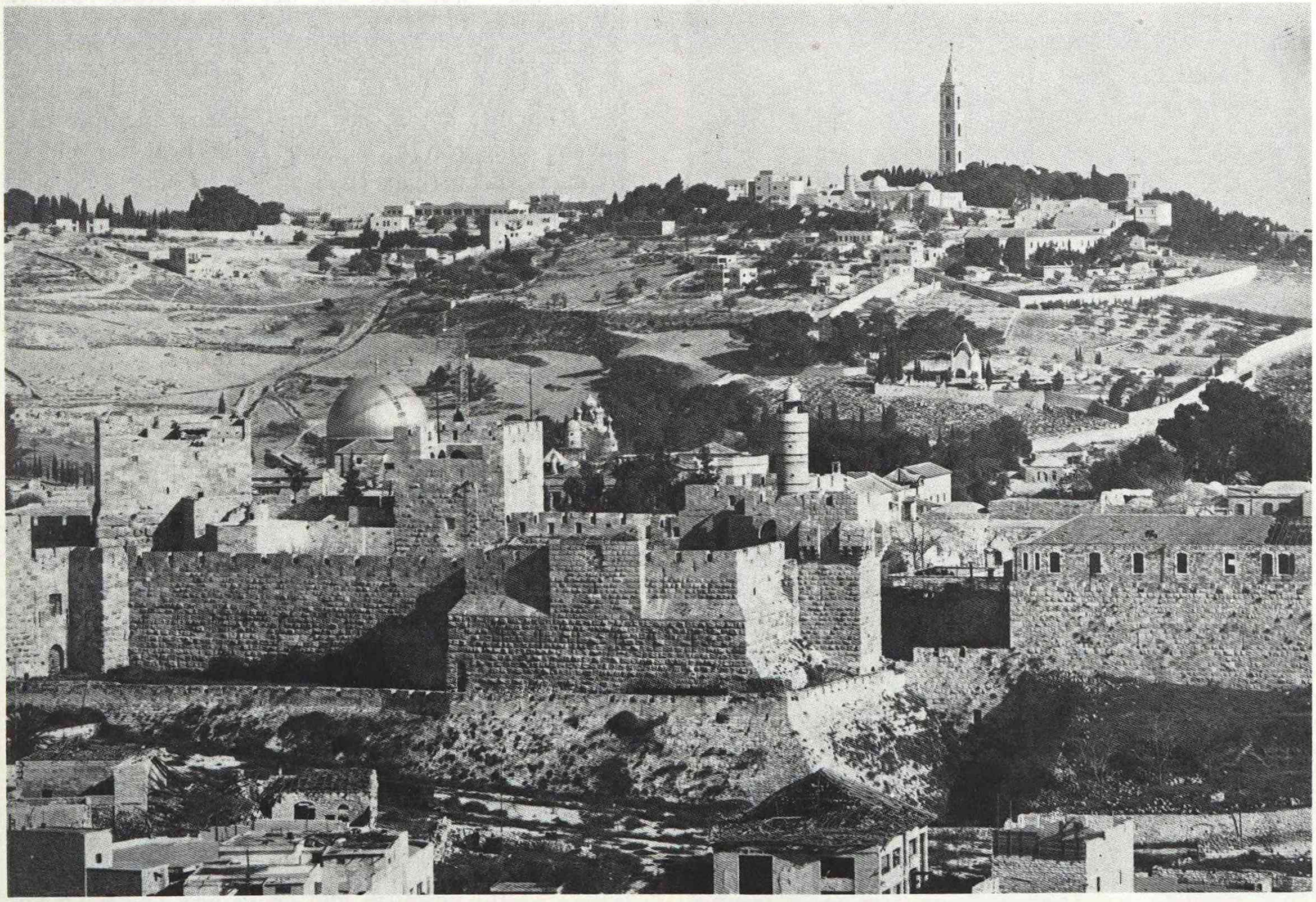
157[*c*] The tenth legion was encamped at the Mount of Olives.

157[*d*] The eleventh hour of the day was the hour before sunset, when the Romans (cf. *War* V, 69 ff.) relaxed after a burning day. The attack on this camp was intended to break through the Roman blockade of greater Jerusalem. The Jews had to steal through the dike and, unnoticed, reach the wall that surrounded the camp.

163[*a*] The whole episode took place away from the crucial events happening on the Temple Mount. The Jews recrossed the dike in the dark and crept through to the city. The narrative then reverts to the erection of the fateful siege embankments.

165[*b*] Twenty cubits, or approx. 10 m.

The northern side of the Mount of Olives, which overlooks Jerusalem, was the site of Titus' permanent camp. The walls and medieval towers of the Citadel loom in the foreground



166[*c*] *The adjoining portico* After their failure to break through the Roman blockade, the besieged tried a new stratagem to hinder the Roman advance. The erection of high siege embankments interfered with the Jews' defense against the Roman attacks. They had no choice but to turn and hack away at any porticoes that were adjacent to the Roman embankments. Josephus stresses that the northern portico—and hence the northwestern corner of the Temple Mount esplanade—was linked with the Antonia fortress (cf. 151[*g*]) and thus lay far too close to the Romans, who were in full control of that area; but the Jews had already set a reckless precedent by burning the portico.

The timbered top of the porticoes The crucial factor of the siege of the Temple Mount which constantly involved the burning of the porticoes, may be more easily understood considering the special architectural elements which characterized them. A salient feature of contemporary Greek and Roman porticoes, on which the Temple court porticoes were apparently patterned, was the timbered structure of the top of the basilical porticoes, as evidenced by the designs of the contemporary great architect, Vitruvius, and the recommendations contained in his engineering treatise, as illustrated.

166[*d*] Fifteen cubits or approx. 7.5 m. The burning of the adjoining porticoes at the hands of the Romans took place on or about the 24th of Tammuz (August).

167[*e*] *With this in mind,* i.e., to destroy the link with the Antonia and prevent a Roman encircling movement around the last pocket of Jewish resistance.

Model of a Roman centurion, commander of a hundred soldiers

Opposite: The "eastern portico" (para. 192) may have been close to the northeast corner of the Temple Mount, which is distinguished by two sections of a tower and wall. The older, Hasmonean, layer (right and bottom), was constructed of roughly squared stones and is topped by Herodian ashlars. This formed part of the eastern rampart of the city, its foundation resting on top of the Kidron valley. It was later buried with earth and served as an Arab cemetery

initiating the firing of their holy places with their own hands. (166) Two days later, on the twenty-fourth of the month mentioned above, the Romans fired the adjoining portico [*c*]; when the flames had spread to a distance of 15 cubits [*d*], the Jews, as before, cut away the roof, showing no regard whatever for this masterpiece of architecture, thus severing links with the Antonia. (167) With this in mind [*e*]—though they could, if they wished, stop the fire—they did not lift a finger, determining the damage to be done as it suited their purpose [*f*]. (168) There was no break in the fighting around the Temple, as the battle raged continuously between small parties sallying out on both sides.

10. The duel between Jonathan and the Romans

(169) In those days a Jew named Jonathan—low of stature and nothing much to look at, and undistinguished by birth and achievements—stepped forward opposite the tomb of John the high priest [*a*], heaped abuse on the Romans and challenged the bravest of them to single combat. (170) But most of the Romans stationed there treated him with contempt—some probably afraid of him, others thinking that a man who courted death was not one to engage at close quarters. (171) They knew that men who despaired of their lives had not only uncontrollable passions but enjoyed also the help of God; and that to risk life in such a duel with one whose defeat would not be glorious—while to be defeated would be disgraceful—was not an act of courage but of recklessness. (172) No one came forward for a long time to challenge him, and the Jew continued to jeer at their cowardice, for he admired himself and despised the Romans; but at last one Pudens, member of a cavalry squadron [*b*], sickened by his bragging and arrogance, and perhaps foolishly overconfident because of his small stature, (173) ran out, joined the battle, and was otherwise gaining on his adversary, when fortune betrayed him; he stumbled, and Jonathan jumped at him and cut his throat; (174) then, stamping on his body, he brandished his dripping sword and waved his shield with the left hand, shouting lustily to the army, bragging over the fallen man, and mocking the onlooking Romans until Priscus, a centurion, shot an arrow that transfixed him while he still pranced about and slew the fool; (175) at this, shouts—very different in character—went up from the Romans. (176) Jonathan, writhing in agony, fell down on the body of his foe, proving that in war undeserved success swiftly brings on itself vengeance.

Chapter III

1. A Jewish ruse and the fire that consumed many Romans

(177) The rebels in the Temple never slackened their overt efforts to repel the troops on the embankments,

and on the twenty-seventh of the same month [*c*] they devised the following ruse. (178) In the western portico they filled the space between the rafters and the ceiling beneath with dry wood, bitumen, and pitch, (179) then withdrew as though utterly exhausted. Thereupon many thoughtless legionaries, carried away by reckless eagerness, charged in pursuit of those who retreated, applied ladders to the porticoes and jumped on them. But the more sensible men, suspicious of the unexplained withdrawal of the Jews, made no move. (180) The portico, however, was crowded with those who climbed onto it, and at that moment the Jews set fire to the whole structure. As the flames shot up suddenly on every side, the Romans who were out of danger were seized with consternation, and those trapped, with utter distress. (181) Encircled by the flames, some hurled themselves into the city behind them, some into the enemy's midst, many in the hope of saving themselves jumped down among their own men and fractured their limbs; but most of those rushing to escape were caught by the fire; some cheated the flames with their own sword. (182) Even those already doomed to some other form of death were instantly trapped by the enveloping conflagration. Caesar, though angry with the victims for climbing onto the porticoes without orders, was at the same time filled with compassion; (183) and though it was impossible to rescue them, it was some comfort to the doomed men to see how grieved was the man for whom they were giving their lives. He was plainly visible as he called out to them, dashing forward and urging those around him to do their utmost to save them. (184) But every man died cheerfully, taking with him those shouts and the sympathy of Caesar like a glorious mourning. (185) Some had managed to take shelter near the portico wall, which was broad, and escaped the fire but they were trapped there by the Jews and, after long holding out in spite of their wounds, they all finally perished.

2. Roman feats of gallantry

(186) The last survivor to fall was a young man named Longus, who added glory to the whole tragic episode, and, deserving of mention as was every man who died, he outshone all the others in bravery. (187) The Jews who were full of admiration and could not kill him in any case, invited him to come down and pledged his safety; his brother Cornelius, on the other hand, begged him not to disgrace his reputation or that of the Roman army. Convinced by this entreaty, he held up his sword in the sight of both armies and killed himself. (188) Among those trapped by the flames, one Artorius saved his life by a trick. He called at the top of his voice to Lucius, a fellow soldier who shared his tent; "I leave you heir to all I have if you come close and catch me." (189) Lucius promptly ran to his aid while Artorius jumped on top of him and survived, while his weight dashed his rescuer against the pavement and killed him instantly [*d*].

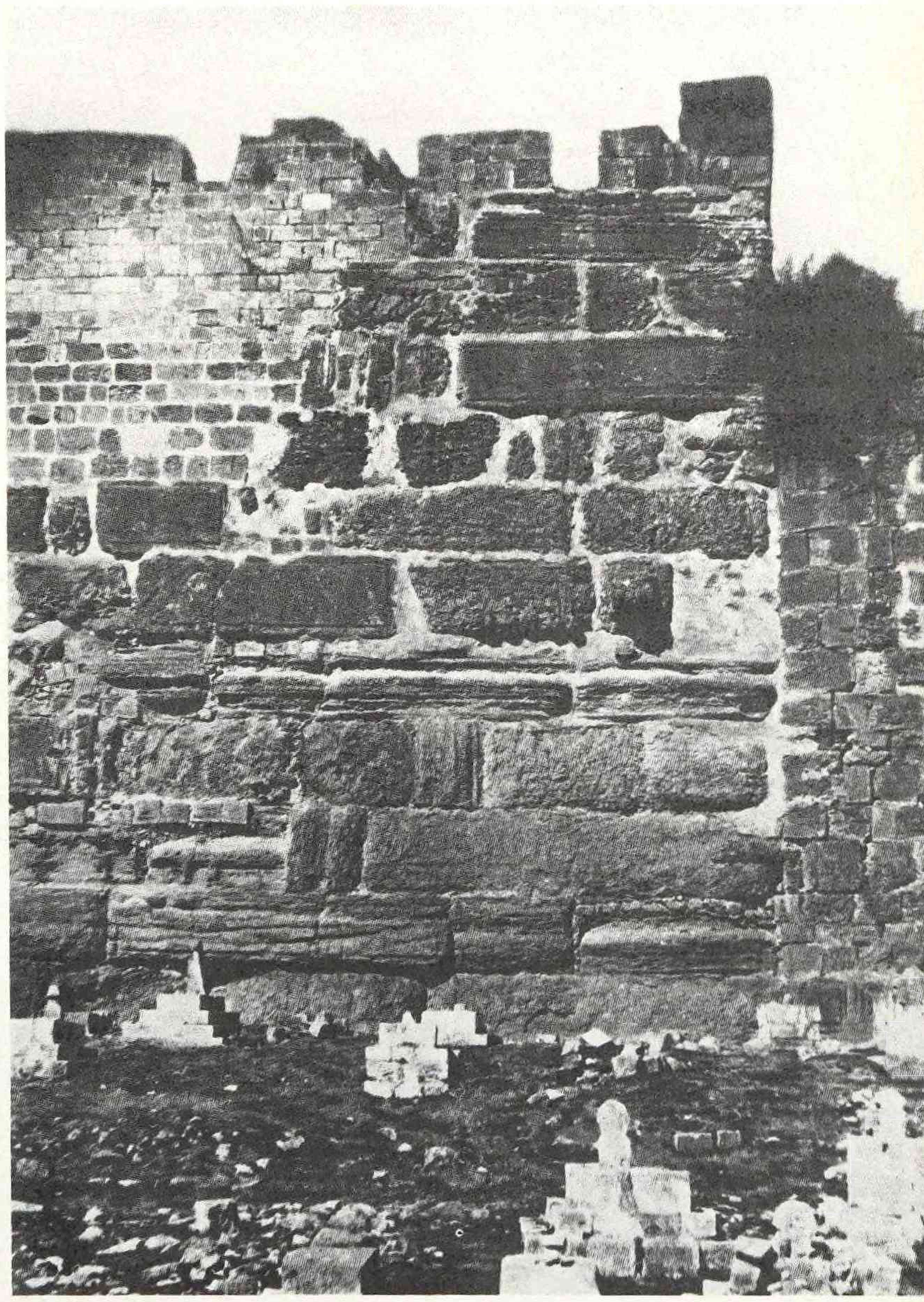
167[*f*] I.e., the purpose of the Jews. Why did the Romans not preempt the Jews in burning the porticoes? The text is silent on the subject. They may not have been able to seize the initiative at the time, or they may have preferred not to be the first to burn the Temple premises. According to Josephus, the Romans presumably meant to spare the Temple; but since the Jews had already taken the initiative, the Romans could not refrain from following suit. This last act already boded the ultimate tragic end, and Josephus aptly compared the burning of the porticoes to cutting off a gangrenous hand (para. 164 above).

169[*a*] The incident near the tomb of John the high priest is not germane to the vital scene of struggle and is a digression. It took place at the western end of the city at the site near the outer First Wall, the point formerly selected by Titus for his first breakthrough to the city (*War* V, 259 ff.).

172[*b*] *Cavalry squadron* is an auxiliary force, or *ala*.

177[*c*] *The same month* was Panemus or Tammuz (August).

189[*d*] Thus ended a last attempt to block the rise of the embankments and the capture of the Temple Mount. Deceived by the Jews' retreat from the top of the western portico, the Romans climbed it; but it had been crammed with combustible material. The nature of the ruse and the rapid expansion of the conflagration explains the helplessness of the Romans trapped on the roof. Josephus, as was his wont, embellished the event with various extraneous incidents.



191[*a*] John's tower was the second of the four he erected (IV, 580-581).

191[*b*] *Over the Xystus* That is, the third gate of the Western Wall (see map) and above the Xystus (which had once housed a gymnasium in Hasmonean days (cf. *War* II, 344; IV, 144). A causeway over the ancient hall led to the Temple esplanade over a space now occupied by the Wilson arch (its upper arch is now used as a synagogue). This causeway served also as an exit from the esplanade of the Temple Mount to the outer Tyropoeon Road, which bordered the Temple Mount on its western side (this spot is referred to again in VI, 325, 377). At the time this street was a few meters lower than the present new synagogal paving that faces the Western Wall.

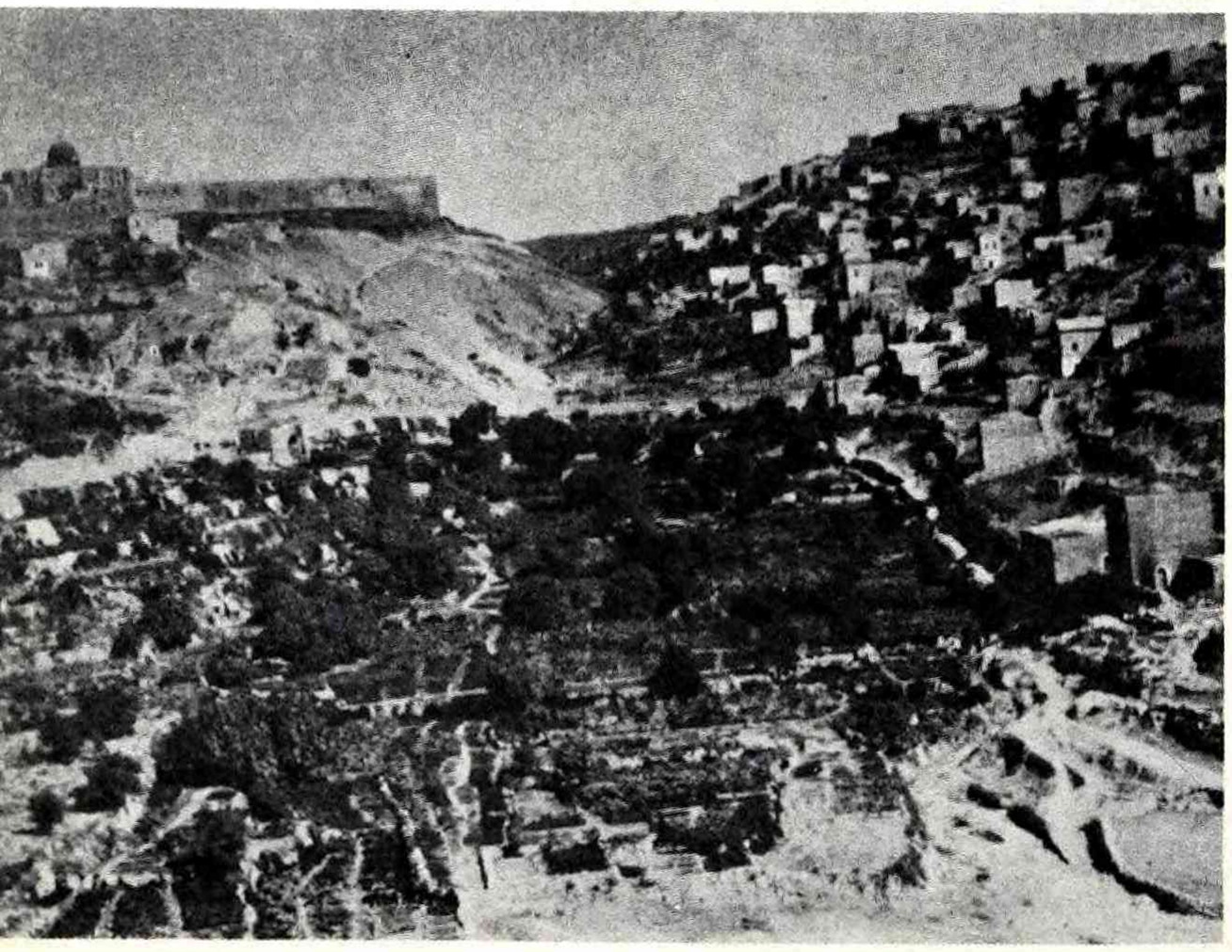
191[*c*] *Hacked away* This added to the isolation of the Jews blockaded in the Temple Mount area.

192[*d*] *The eastern portico* The "following day" referred to was the 28th of Panemus/Tammuz. The Romans burnt the eastern portico overlooking the deep Kidron valley, which separated Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. As already noted, a Herodian tower—whose remains are still visible—stood at the northern end of the eastern portico.

192[*e*] *At the time* This was apparently the last Roman tactic in isolating the Temple Mount from the city, or any exits to the Kidron valley and the east. It eliminated also John of Gischala's last hold over the eastern ramparts. The scene was laid for the closing episode of the siege.

198[*a*] The drachma was a silver coin of varying value. The author does not specify which drachma (local or foreign). It may be noted that this phase is the most horrendous tale of the famine in Jerusalem,.

The northern portico of the Temple Mount (right side of the city wall) rose over the deep Kidron valley (below)



John's tower consumed by the flames; the northwestern portico burned by the Romans

(190) While this blow for a time filled the Roman ranks with despondency, it helped them in the long run by making them less easy to tempt and more cautious against Jewish traps from which they suffered, mainly because of their ignorance of the nature of the premises and the character of the enemy. (191) The portico was consumed by fire as far as the tower that John had erected [*a*], during his war with Simon, over the gates that led out over the Xystus [*b*]. The rest of the portico was hacked away [*c*] by the Jews after the destruction of the troops who had mounted it. (192) Then on the following day, the Romans in turn burnt the entire northern portico as far as its junction with the eastern portico [*d*] overlooking the valley called Kidron, which dropped to a frightening depth. Such was the state of affairs close to the Temple at the time [*e*].

3. The final horrors of the famine

(193) Meanwhile, countless numbers fell victim to the famine in the city. The sufferings they endured were unspeakable. (194) In every home, the very shadow of food led to conflict, and the closest relatives came to blows, snatching from each other any pitiful means of sustenance. (195) Not even the dying were believed to be in want of food, and even those expiring were searched by the brigands in case any of them had food hidden inside their clothing and were feigning death (196). These desperate ruffians stumbled and staggered along like mad dogs, open-mouthed with hunger, battering at the doors like drunken men, and in their helpless confusion bursting into the same house two or three times in a single hour. (197) Necessity drove them to gnaw everything, and objects that not even the filthiest dumb animals would look at they picked up and ate. In the end they did not stop at eating belts and shoes; they stripped off the leather from their shields and gnawed at it. (198) Some tried to live on scraps of old hay, and there were people who collected stalks and sold a tiny bunch for four Attic drachmas [*a*]. (199) But why should I go on to describe the inanimate things that hunger made them unashamed enough to eat, as I now describe an act of which there is no parallel in the annals of Greece or any other country [*b*], a horrible and unspeakable deed and one incredible to hear. (200) I hope that I shall not be suspected by posterity of grotesque inventions and would have gladly passed over this calamity in silence, had there not been countless contemporary witnesses to bear me out. Moreover, my country would have little reason to thank me if I suppressed the narrative of the horrible miseries that it had to endure.

4. A mother who devoured her own child

(201) There was a woman, Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, who lived east of the Jordan in the village

of Bethezuba (meaning "house of hyssop" [*c*]), distinguished in family and fortune, who had fled with the rest of the people to Jerusalem where she became engulfed in the siege. (202) Most of her property, which she had packed up and brought with her from Peraea [*d*] to the city, had been plundered by the tyrants; the remnants of her treasures and any food she had managed to procure were being stolen day after day by their henchmen. (203) Full of indignation, the wretched women kept on abusing and cursing the extortioners and thus aroused their anger. (204) But no one, either out of resentment or pity, put her to death as she wished; weary of providing food for others—which it was impossible to find anywhere—and while hunger ravaged her internal organs, and marrow and rage consumed her still further, she finally yielded to the promptings of fury and necessity and defied nature itself. (205) Seizing her child, a babe at the breast, she cried, "Poor baby, why should I keep you alive admidst war, famine, and civil strife? (206) We will only face slavery with the Romans, even if we survive until they arrive, but famine will forestall slavery, and the rebels are more cruel than either. (207) Come, be my food and an avenging omen for the partisans, and to the world the only tale as yet untold of Jewish misery." (208) So saying, she killed her son, roasted him, and ate one half, concealing and saving the rest. (209) The partisans appeared at once, attracted by the unholy odor and threatened that unless she produced what she had prepared, she would be killed on the spot. (210) She retorted that she had saved as fine a helping for them and disclosed the remnants of her child. Overcome with instant horror and stupefaction, they stood immobile at the sight. She said, "This child is my own, and so is this deed. Come eat, I too have done so. (211) Don't be softer than a woman or more tender-hearted than a mother. But if you are pious and do not approve of my sacrifice, then I have eaten in your behalf and let me keep the rest." (212) At that they left trembling, cowards for once, though with some reluctance they left even this food to the mother. The whole city immediately talked of this abomination; everybody saw this tragedy before his eyes and shuddered as if the crime were his own. (213) The starving people desired to die; they envied those who had gone before and had neither seen nor heard of these horrors.

5. Titus' protestation

(214) The dreadful news soon spread to the Romans. Some refused to believe, others were greatly distressed, but to most the effect was to increase their detestation of the Jewish people. (215) Caesar disclaimed all responsibility for this matter [*a*] in the sight of God, and protested that he had offered the Jews peace and self-rule and an amnesty for all past offenses; but they preferred sedition to agreement, war to peace, hunger instead of plenty and abundance; (216) and, having begun with their own hands to set

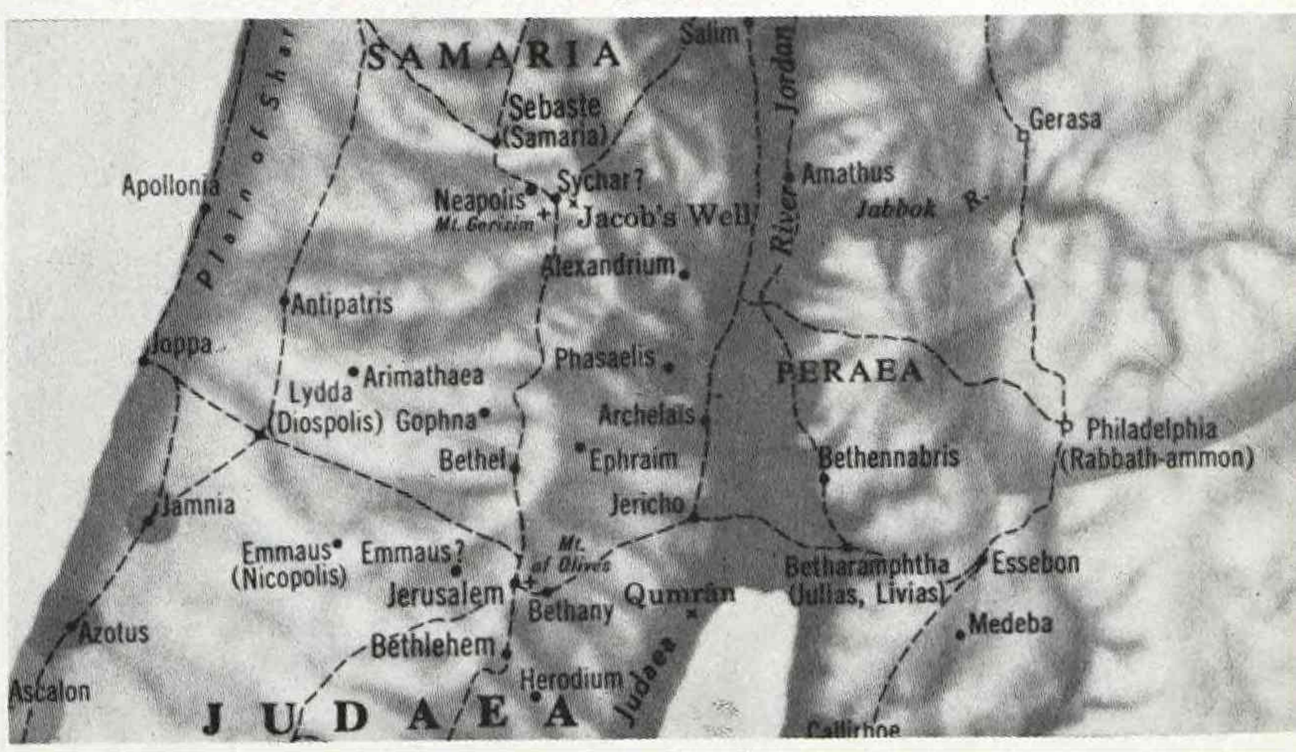
199[*b*] *Any other country* Mothers have been known before to have eaten their children; e.g., at the siege of Samaria (II Kings 6, 28) and during Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem (Lament. 4, 10). This execrable act is regarded in ancient Jewish traditions as God's punishment, and prophets have invoked such threats in Jeremiah 19, 9; Ezekiel 5, 10.

201[*c*] *House of Hyssop,* or, Beth-ezov.

202[*d*] *Peraea* in Transjordan.

215[*a*] *Titus' disclaimer and justification* It is generally agreed by modern historians that he had already decided at this stage to burn the Temple, regardless of the "patent hypocrisy of his 'holy anger' and sense of righteousness with which his words reek.... It should be noted that his words (in para. 216) contain an anticipatory excuse for the burning of the Temple, which is announced here in advance, and the Zealots are blamed for the destruction of the sanctuary" (G. Alon, *op. cit.*, p. 259). But quite apart from this, we find that numerous passages (*War* V, 331 ff.; 433-435; VI, 93-110) in the account of the disaster link the fate of the sanctuary with that of the city; they imply that in the Roman view they were both subject to the same sentence. Nor is it reasonable to suppose, according to G. Alon, that "they only intended to destroy the city and to leave the Temple, for without Jerusalem the sanctuary would have been without practical value and could not have survived by itself as the center of the nation's spiritual life.... It therefore appears that Josephus was afraid to explain Titus' real intention in regard to the Temple—even when he was able to 'excuse' its destruction, and restricted his testimony solely to Jerusalem. Only by revealing a little he disclosed a great deal" (G. Alon, *op. cit.*, p. 259. Cf. note 228[*a*] below).

Mary was a native of Peraea, east of the Jordan



220[*a*] *The 8th of Lous* Corresponds to the 8th of Ab (c. Sept. 28) in the Jewish calendar. The Romans had been raising these embankments in order to scale the supporting walls of the esplanade. The reiteration of this basic operation in capturing the Temple carries the action up to this date, the most critical moment of the war.

220[*b*] The siege embankments are those referred to in notes 150[*c-d*].

220[*c*] *The western portico of the outer court of the sanctuary* Older translations read: "the western edifice of the inner Temple," but this reading is confusing since the Roman attack had not yet reached the inner Temple precincts.

221[*d*] *Bonded stones* The battering rams were hauled up onto the embankments and put to use after they had been used to batter the outer wall, lower down, during the previous days; but they could do nothing against the gigantic supporting walls at that level, whose huge ashlars were perfectly bonded without any cement. This may have granted him a last opportunity to keep the Temple safe from injury; but the reverses he suffered changed his mood. The outer and lower gates in question were situated in the outer supporting walls of the Temple Mount, leading in and out of the Temple esplanade. In summary, the major battle was fought while the Romans tried to break through the massive outer walls; then, when they failed, Titus achieved his aim by setting fire to the gates, thus opening a way into the outer Temple courts. The use of fire is also mentioned by Dio Cassius (LXVI, 6, 1), though he thought that the fire was set by the Jews to hinder the Roman advance. This was not the case.

222[*e*] *The northern gate* This is the Taddāy gate, as attested by *Middot* 1, 3 and referred to in para. 151[*f*] above. The northern area of the Temple Mount, as already noted, was far more accessible to attack than the other sides, which were bordered by a precipitous climbing over the retaining walls. This gate was also the direct topographic link between the Temple Mount and the new Bezetha quarter (cf. *War* V, 149-151; 246). From ancient descriptions it seemed to have a megalithic appearance, with two great arch stones above, one leaning against the other.

222[*f*] *The porticoes* These were adjacent to the northern gate and, apparently, were those situated on either side of, and within, the gate.

226[*g*] *Ensigns* The capture of the standards by the enemy was the ultimate insult and challenge to Roman arms.

228[*a*] *The gates... set on fire* This implies the Romans' prior decision to burn the Temple. Josephus' account seems to argue that Titus intended to capture the Temple by force. His testimony there is equivocal and tendentious. He wrote his books in AD 75-79 when the Romans, after having crushed Jewish resistance, wished to appear more benevolent—even retrospectively. They may even have suggested that the writer, who was subject to Roman censorship as well as their protection, should relate to future generations the glory and benevolence of his Roman masters and benefactors. It may be said, in Josephus' defense, that he did not succeed in whitewashing all their deeds, and unwittingly—or possibly even consciously—through certain slips of the pen, told the truth when he could evade expurgation. An eloquent echo may be found in the speech of the hero Eleazar at Masada in *War* VII, 320-383. In summary, when history attempts to evaluate the situation on the basis of fact, it may discount some of Josephus' "pro-Roman" views that welled from his belated pacifism; but it cannot discount most of the other factual historical and topographical data for which his writings also serve as vehicle, and which he did not distort. B. Mazar has remarked that when Josephus wrote his work toward the end of Vespasian's reign (AD 79), he hoped that the end of Jewish resistance, as a whole, had come after the devastating defeats and that no further hostilities would occur in Judaea. He may have found some consolation in this thought and in the belief that the Jews would eventually enjoy the fruits of peace under Rome in the years to come. Such wishful thinking may have affected the mode of his address and his final conciliatory attitude to Titus and the dominant power. But he was proved wrong. Jewish revolt did not cease with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. It continued, and even even reached its peak during the second revolt led by Bar-Kokhba in AD 135. This was even preceded, during Trajan's reign, by the protracted war conducted by the Jews of Egypt, Cyrenaica (Libya) and Cyprus (115-117) against the Roman Empire and the gentile populations of these countries.

229[*b*], 231[*b*] Cf. *War* V, 531. Titus let them go but did not allow

fire to their Temple, which was being preserved by Rome, were indeed deserving of such food. (217) However, he would now cover the full abomination of the murder of that child with the ruins of their fatherland and would not leave standing on the earth for the sun to look upon a city where mothers ate such food. (218) And yet, he added, such food was less suited to the mothers than the fathers, who remained in arms after so many miseries. (219) As he said this, he bethought himself of these men's desperation, convinced that they were past being brought to reason after having endured all the agonies that they might so easily have avoided had they but repented!

Chapter IV

1. The walls resistant to the battering rams

(220) When by the eighth of the month of Lous [*a*] two of the legions had completed the embankments [*b*], Titus ordered the rams to be posted opposite the western portico of the outer court of the sanctuary [*c*]. (221) The previous six days before their arrival, the most powerful of the siege engines had incessantly battered the wall without result; like the others, it made no impact on the huge and perfectly bonded stones [*d*]. (222) Another team tried to undermine the foundations of the northern gate [*e*] and after great exertion succeeded in levering out the outer stones, but the gate, which was hung on the inner stones, stood firm, till, despairing of all attempts with engines and crowbars, the Romans set up ladders against the porticoes [*f*]. (223) The Jews were in no hurry to intervene, but when they climbed up, they vigorously attacked them; (224) some were thrust back and hurled down headlong, others were encountered and slain; many, as they stepped off the ladders, were unable to shield themselves with their bucklers and were cut down with swords. Some ladders, crowded with men, were pushed sideways from above and thrown to the ground, (225) not, however, without inflicting considerable losses. Romans who had brought up the standards fought fiercely around them, realizing that it would be a terrible disgrace if they were captured. (226) But eventually the Jews captured even these ensigns [*g*], destroying all who had mounted the ladders. The remainder, demoralized by the fate of the fallen, withdrew. (227) Of the Romans no one died without having achieved something. Among the rebels, all those who had distinguished themselves in previous action fought gallantly once more in this instance; among them Eleazar, nephew of the tyrant Simon. (228) But when Titus realized that his attempts to spare a foreign temple resulted in the injury and slaughter of his troops, he ordered the gates to be set on fire [*a*].

2. Desertion of prominent citizens

(229) In the meantime two men deserted to him, Ananus of Emmaus [*b*], the most bloodthirsty of

The lower Ophel hillside (right) facing the Siloam village (left)

The Siloam Pool.

Interior of the aqueduct of the Herodian period beneath the Tyropoeon street that skirted the Western Wall. The aqueduct lies 4.5 m below the street. Its sides are rock-hewn and the vaulting is constructed of chiseled stone blocks. The aqueduct served to gather the rainwater flowing into it from other channels

Simon's body-guards, and Archelaus son of Magaddatus, expecting a pardon because they were abandoning the Jews after having achieved momentary success. (230) Titus, however, denounced this as another of their knavish tricks and, having heard of their cruelty to their own people, he felt strongly inclined to kill them both, noting that they had been driven to take this course through necessity and had not come over of their own free will. For men who deserted their city when it was enveloped in flames, by their own actions, did not deserve to live. (231) However, his pledged word overcame his anger, and he let them go, though he did not grant them the same privileges he had accorded other deserters [*b*].

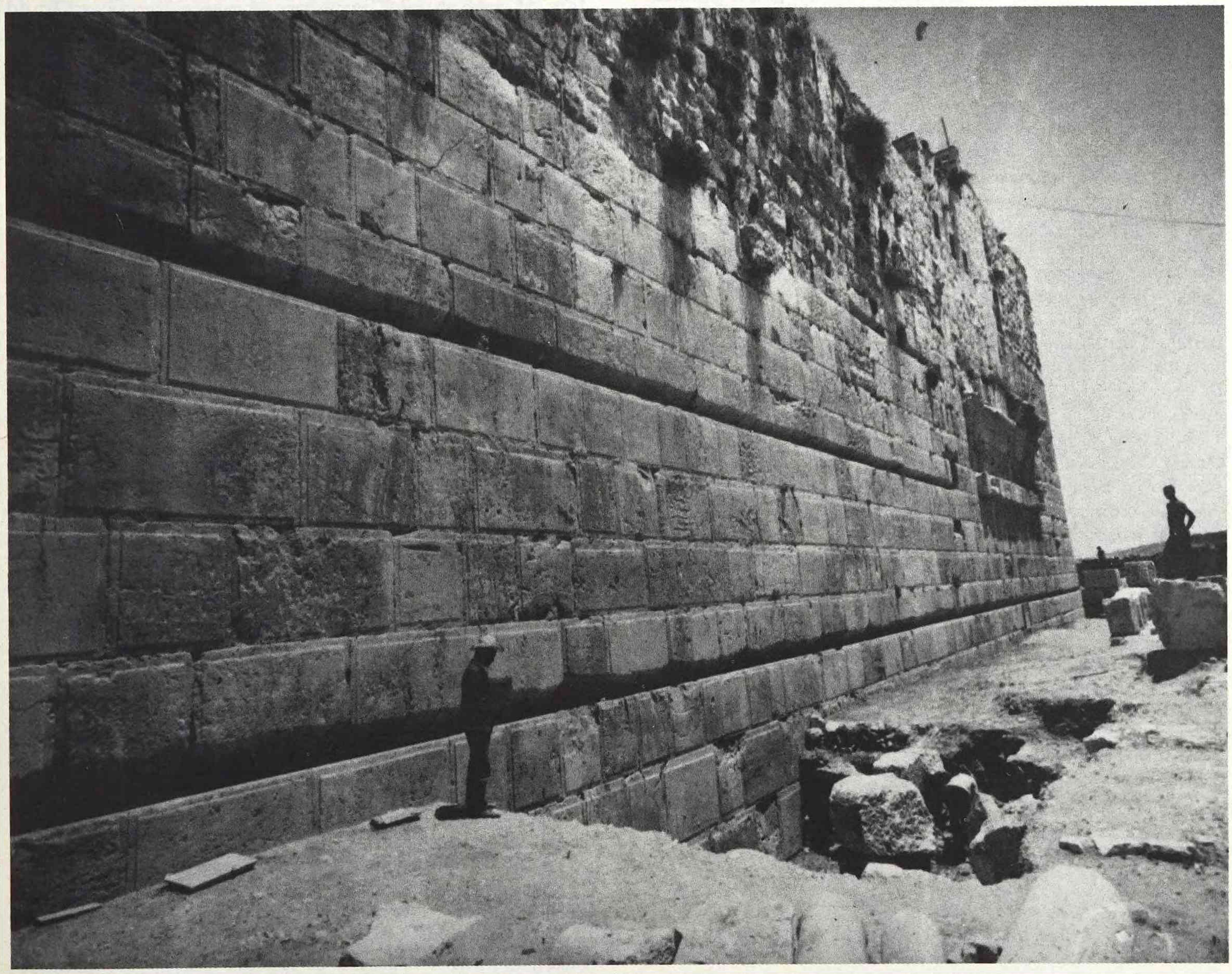
them the privileges accorded other "deserters" who surrendered to him and whom he treated as "suppliants" (*War* V, 453), as well as those whom he settled at Gophna (VI, 115) where they came to no harm. This testimony is suspect, since Josephus specified that Titus did not treat these defectors as he did the other deserters; for what kindness could he have extended to them, seeing that he had let them go free? Generally, whenever one meets with Roman "benevolence" (as in the above case) one also uncovers their brutality, as will become evident in *War* VII below.

232[*c*] *Silver* Probably of the hinges and locks.

Setting fire to the gates and porticoes

(232) By now the troops were already setting fire to the gates; the silver [*c*] melted all over quickly, admitting the flames to the solid woodwork, whence it fastened in a dense mass onto the porticoes. (233) When the Jews saw the ring of fire, they lost all power of body and mind; because of their consternation and terror, no one attempted to extinguish the flames; thus

The Ḥēl platform that supported the Temple edifice was built of huge carved blocks, similar to those, shown below, that were used in the outer Western Wall of the Temple Mount



paralyzed, they stood looking on. (234) Yet, in their dismay [*d*] at this destruction, they did not have the sense to preserve what was still left intact [*d*], but only increased their rage against the Romans, as if the whole sanctuary had already burst into flames. (235) All through that day and the following night the fire prevailed, for the whole range of the porticoes could not be ignited at once, but only one segment after another [*e*].

3. Titus' consultation with his staff

(236) The next day Titus, having ordered a division of his army to put out the fire and to make a road to the gates in order to facilitate the ascent of the legions, summoned his generals. (237) The six chief staff officers who assembled were Tiberius Alexander [*a*], the chief of staff; Sextus Cerealius [*b*], Larcius Lepidus, and Titus Phrygius, who commanded respectively the fifth, tenth, and fifteenth legions; (238) Haterius Fronto, prefect of the two legions from Alexandria; and Marcus Antonius Julianus, the procurator of Judaea. After the other prefects and tribunes gathered, Titus brought up for discussion the fate of the sanctuary [*c*]. (239) Some thought that the law of war should be enforced, since the Jews would not cease to rebel as long as the Temple remained a rallying point from every quarter [*d*]. (240) Others argued that if the Jews abandoned it, and no one placed any weapons there, it should be saved, but in case they mounted it again for military purposes, it should be burned, for it would then be a fortress and no longer a sanctuary, and thenceforth the impiety would be blameable not to the Romans but to those who had left them no choice.

Titus' declaration followed by the extinction of the flames

(241) But Titus declared that even if the Jews were to mount it and fight from it, he would not make war on inanimate constructions instead of men nor, whatever happened, burn down such a magnificent edifice [*e*]; for it would be the Romans who would lose thereby, and if it were preserved [*f*], the empire would gain a unique monument. (242) So Fronto, Alexander, and Cerealius, encouraged by this pronouncement, came around to his view. (243) Titus thereupon adjourned the council and, instructing the officers to allow the other troops time for rest—that he might find them full of vigor when fighting would be resumed—he ordered the picked men from the cohorts to clear a road [*g*] through the ruins and put out the fire.

4. The ninth and tenth days of Ab (Sept. AD 70)

(244) Exhaustion and shock had depressed the energies of the Jews throughout that day; but on the next, having recovered their strength and confidence,

234[*d*] *Dismay* The horror that reduced the Jews to a state of utter shock was the sight of the huge gates of the wall and part of the porticoes consumed by fire, as though God had already forsaken them, for the legions were now occupying all the courts of the esplanade.

235[*e*] *One segment after another* The burnt structures appeared to be mainly in the northern sections of the upper courts; there did not seem to be similar structures in the western sections.

237[*a*] The chief of staff and in charge of all camps (V, 45; II, 220).

237[*b*] *Sextus Cerealius* headed the army.

238[*c*] *Titus' military council and the fate of the sanctuary* Josephus' statement about the various opinions expressed at the council indicates that there were, at this time, three conflicting views among the leading Romans in the discussion of the military problems involved in the siege of the Temple Mount. It appears that many advocated the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple even if the Jewish rebels were to evacuate them, so that there would not be a stronghold for future rebellions. Others argued in favor of saving both, in accordance with the practices of civilized nations in sparing their enemies' holy places. Another group advocated a middle course, namely, that if the Temple were captured after fighting, it should be saved. Josephus failed to mention clearly, on the one hand, that in the war council it was expressly resolved to occupy the Temple and, if need be, take it by force or even destroy it and, on the other hand, that the Temple *was occupied by armed Jews* and consequently had to be stormed. This is only hinted at indirectly by Josephus but confirmed in Dio Cassius in LXVI, 6, 1-3. Which of these views presented at the council would ultimately prevail depended on a number of factors. The Romans never ceased to regard the vast Jewish Diaspora in the empire, and the Jews of Parthia, as a considerable power to contend with, and many were wary of the potentialities of such a situation if the Jews of Palestine were not defeated.

239[*d*] *From every quarter* This involves the role of Adiabene in Parthia (northeastern Mesopotamia), which necessarily affected Rome's eastern policy. It helped to bolster the self-confidence of the Jews of Palestine who, at the beginning of the great revolt, expected to receive tangible support from this source. Members of the royal family of Adiabene in fact took part in the revolt, beginning with the struggle with Cestius Gallus until the very end (M. Stern, p. 177-178; cf. *War* II, 520, V, 475, VI, 356). In former times it also had been the Parthians who prevented Herod from overcoming Antigonus in his struggle (I, 248-255). Another factor was the desire of the Caesars to terminate the war expeditiously and free them from their reputed worry over the Jewish rebels, who might serve as a bad example to other peoples. In any case, though Titus was cruel, in the end he wished to convey the impression that he was *amor et deliciae generis humani.*

241[*e*] *Titus declared* Here is the crux of the problem. Josephus asserts that when the gates were completely burned down, it was decided by the council to spare the Temple. A. Momigliano, in CAH X, p. 862, comes closer to the truth in demonstrating how Josephus' portrayal of Titus, striving to preserve the Temple, is contradicted by the fourth-century Christian monk Sulpicius Severus in his *Chronica* ii, 30, a passage deriving from a lost work of Tacitus; he asserts that Titus issued a deliberate order to destroy the Temple. "This passage has undergone Christian modification, but this modification affects only the reasons for Titus' decision, and not the decision itself. Josephus' denial is clearly tendencious." According to G. Alon, "it would appear, therefore, that Josephus was afraid to explain Titus' real intention—even when he was able to 'excuse' its destruction—and restricted his testimony solely to Jerusalem. Only by revealing a little he disclosed a great deal" (G. Alon, p. 259).

they sallied out around the second hour [*a*] through the east gate [*b*] and attacked the Roman troops who occupied the outer court of the Temple. (245) The Romans stood their ground and met the onslaught by sheltering behind a solid wall of shields held out in front of them and closed their ranks; but it was evident that they could not hold out for long against the fanatical fury of their assailants, who surpassed them in numbers. (246) Caesar, who watched the engagement from the Antonia and anticipated the collapse of the line, now rushed to their assistance with his picked horsemen. (247) The Jews could not withstand their charge, and when their front ranks fell, the rest withdrew. (248) But whenever the Romans drew back, they whipped around and pressed them hard; but when these in turn wheeled around, they fell back and fled; this lasted till about the fifth hour of the day [*c*] when the Jews were overpowered and shut up in the inner Temple courts.

C. DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

5. The Temple burned despite Titus' orders

(249) Titus retired to the Antonia, intending to launch a full scale attack the following day at dawn and take possession of the Temple. (250) The sanctuary, however, had long before been condemned by God to the flames [*a*]; and now, after the passing of the years, the fated day was at hand, the tenth of the month of Lous—the very date when centuries before it had been burned by the king of Babylon. (251) But now it was their own people who had caused and started the conflagration [*b*]. For when Titus had withdrawn, the rebels shortly after attacked the Romans again [*b*], and a clash followed between the guards of the sanctuary and the troops who were putting out the fire inside the inner court; the latter routed the Jews and followed in hot pursuit right up to the Temple itself. (252) Then one of the soldiers, without awaiting any orders and with no dread of so momentous a deed, but urged on by some supernatural force, snatched a blazing piece of wood and, climbing on another soldier's back, hurled the flaming brand through a low golden window [*c*] that gave access, on the north side, to the rooms that surrounded the sanctuary. (253) As the flames shot up, the Jews let out a shout of dismay that matched the tragedy; they flocked to the rescue, with no thought of sparing their lives or husbanding their strength; for the sacred structure that they had constantly guarded with such devotion was vanishing before their very eyes.

6. The ferocity of the Roman army

(254) A runner brought the news to Titus while he rested in his tent after the battle. Leaping up as he was, he ran to the Temple to extinguish the conflagra-

241[*f*] *If it were preserved* This seems a dubious argument if it did reflect Titus' own opinion. He was moved by military considerations, and the preservation of the Temple was not paramount in his mind. Nevertheless, on the eve of the 9th of Ab (Sept.), the Temple had not been touched by fire.

243[*g*] *Clear a road* Titus intended to capture the Temple and its treasures as well as to annihilate the considerable number of rebels who defended them. To achieve this he needed a strategically unencumbered line of communication (for advance and possible retreat) to the very feet of the high Temple platform. The clearance, apparently begun on the 9th of Lous (Jewish Ab) lasted till the next day.

244[*a*] *The second hour* or 8 A.M. of the 10th of Ab (Sept.).

244[*b*] *The east gate* of the Temple compound which faced the rising sun and led to the esplanade.

248[*c*] *The fifth hour* or 11 A.M. saw the end of the large-scale assault by the beleaguered rebels through the east gate, in an attempt to surround or attack the Romans in the rear, while they were busy hacking a path through the debris of the outer courts. This was a last desperate effort; yet they did not try to break through to the city and liberate themselves, but stood their ground in the Temple to the last.

250[*a*] *God's reputed condemnation of Jerusalem* According to the foregoing, the date of the Temple fire was the 10th of Lous (Ab i.e. Sept.). Josephus may have based this opinion on the tradition expressed in Lamentations 2, 17; Daniel 10, 26 over the 10th of Ab, the anniversary of the destruction of the First Temple by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 42, 12). Rabbinic tradition, however, relates the destruction to the 9th of Ab (*M. Ta'anith* 4, 6). It thus regards as the day of the destruction the day on which Titus set fire to the gates of the Temple. Hence the 10th witnessed the destruction of the Temple; he thus accords this date with tradition. A later *Mishna* tradition, *B. Ta'anith* 29a, is none too clear on the subject when it records that it was precisely at the "going out" of the Sabbath that the Temple was destroyed. Later Jewish tradition generally kept the anniversary of the double burning (First and Second Temples) on the 9th of Ab. In order to dispel doubts about the proper day of mourning, it includes the 8th of Ab as well, i.e., the day when the gates were burned as a prelude to the ultimate destruction of the 10th of Ab, thus keeping a degree of symmetry between corresponding events in the two destructions.

251[*b*] *Started the conflagration... attacked the Romans again.* (Cf. 244-248). In other words, the Jews had unwittingly drawn their pursuers to the fateful spot, and among the pursuers was one of the soldiers who had previously helped to extinguish the blaze in the courts.

252[*c*] *The golden window* The Jews tried to defend the unprotected Temple entrance situated on the east, opposite the great altar of sacrifices. No defense was apparently provided, however, for the northwestern side of the inner courts. In that wall there was a window overlaid with gold, and this is where the firebrand was hurled. The window may have belonged to a passage abutting on the inner courts and one of the chambers that surrounded the sanctuary (see diagram and gates marked B.D.E, and *War* V, 220-221). The flames spread from there to some flammable objects. Hence, the deed was committed as though the Temple were foredoomed, as expressed in the tragic sentence at the beginning of para. 250.

tion. (255) He was followed by all his generals, and these, in turn, by the excited legionaries, with the shouting and confusion characteristic of a disorganized rush by such a large force. (256) Caesar, both through voice and a raised hand, waved to the combatants to put out the fire; but his shouts were not heard, as their ears were deafened by the overwhelming din, and his beckoning hand went unheeded amid the distractions of the fight and the avenging fury [*d*]. (257) No exhortation or threat could now restrain the impetuosity of the legions; for passion was in supreme command. Crowded together around the entrances, many were trampled down by their companions; others, stumbling on the smoldering and smoked-filled ruins of the porticoes, died as miserably as the defeated. (258) As they drew closer to the Temple, they pretended not even to hear Caesar's orders, but urged the men in front to throw in more firebrands. (259) The rebels were powerless to help; carnage and flight spread throughout. Most of the slain were peaceful citizens, weak and unarmed, and they were butchered where they were caught [*e*]. The heap of corpses mounted higher and higher about the altar [*f*]; a stream of blood flowed down the Temple's steps, and the bodies of those slain at the top slipped to the bottom.

7. Caesar's vain attempt to save the Temple

(260) When Caesar failed to restrain the fury of his frenzied soldiers, and the fire could not be checked, he entered the building with his generals and looked at the holy place of the sanctuary and all its furnishings, which exceeded by far the accounts current in foreign lands and fully justified their splendid repute in our own [*a*]. (261) As the flames had not yet penetrated to the inner sanctum, but were consuming the chambers that surrounded the sanctuary, Titus assumed correctly that there was still time to save the structure [*b*]; (262) he ran out and by personal appeals he endeavored to persuade his men to put out the fire, instructing Liberalius, a centurion of his bodyguard of lancers, to club any of the men who disobeyed his orders. (263) But their respect for Caesar and their fear of the centurion's staff who was trying to check them were overpowered by their rage, their detestation of the Jews, and an utterly uncontrolled lust for battle. (264) Most of them were spurred on, moreover, by the expectation of loot, convinced that the interior was full of money and dazzled by observing that everything around them was made of gold. (265) But they were forestalled by one of those who had entered into the building, and who, when Caesar dashed out to restrain the troops [*a*], pushed a firebrand, in the darkness, into the hinges of the gate [*b*]. (266) Then, when the flames suddenly shot up from the interior, Caesar and his generals withdrew, and no one was left to prevent those outside from kindling the blaze. Thus, in defiance of Caesar's wishes, the Temple was set on fire.

256[*d*] *Avenging fury* Some commentators have wondered how the supreme commander's signals to his troops—a standard procedure—were neither seen nor heeded, for the commander's will must have been understood, despite the noise and panic. In their fury the soldiers likely no longer paid attention to this command.

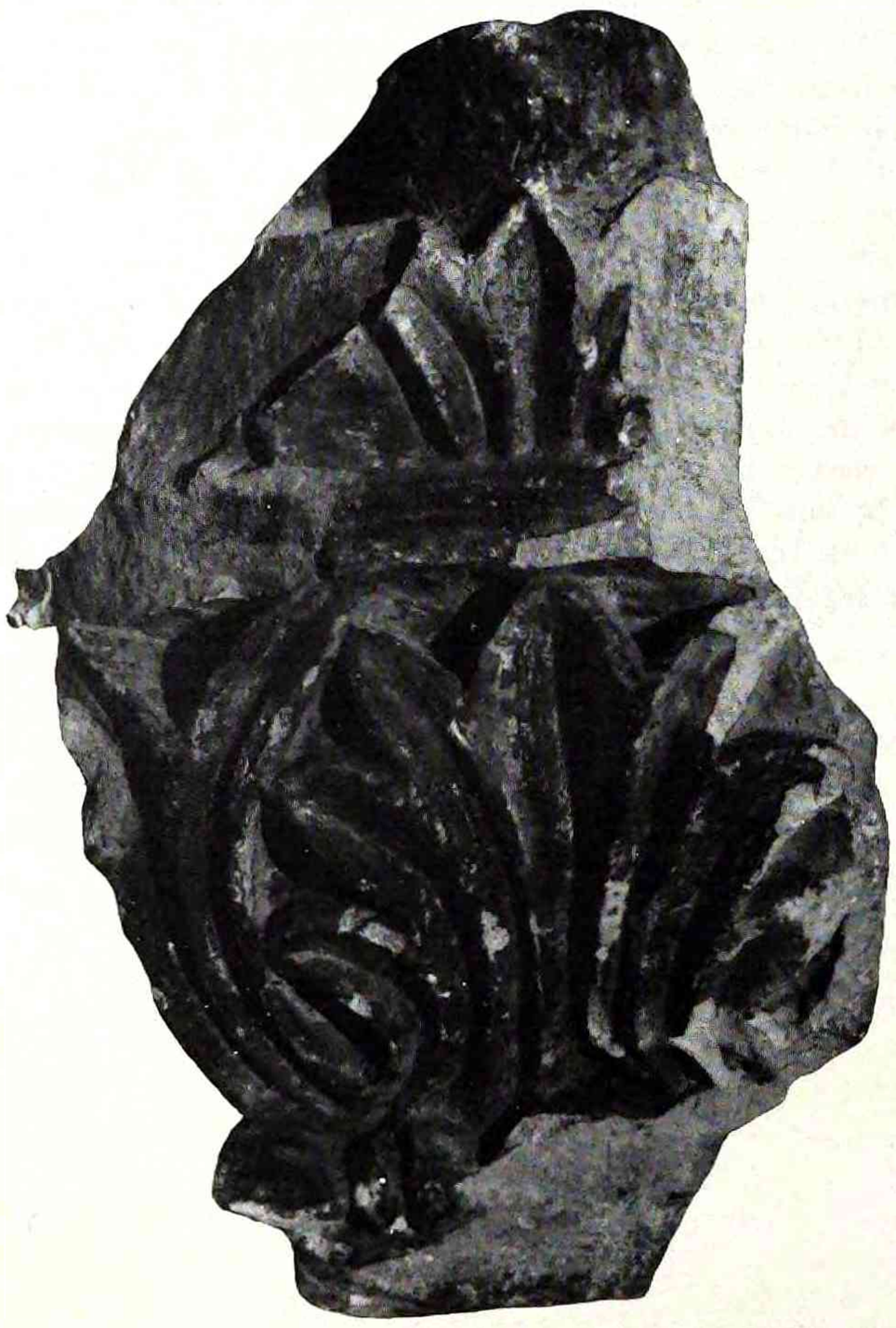
259[*e*] *Were caught* The crowds ran from the burning courts to the narrow "Courts of the priests," which faced the Temple on the east. Young and old noncombatants were butchered mercilessly.

259[*f*] *Altar* See diagram of the Temple for the position of the steps. Meanwhile, the Jewish combatants retired to the southern inner courts, which had not been afire, with the Romans in hot pursuit (near the sites marked I, J, K, L in the diagram).

260[*a*] *The world-wide repute of the Temple* At this point Josephus interrupts his tragic account to expatiate sadly on the majestic beauty of the Temple, which all Jews regarded as the acme of splendor. A similar impression is also conveyed in the account of Pompey's intrusion into the Temple and his awe at what he saw (*War* I, 152). Contemporary Jews always said that "he who had not beheld the Temple had never seen anything more beautiful." This observation cannot be gauged objectively, but other parallel magnificent structures and their decorations left by Herod in other parts of his kingdom, among them Herodion Masada—as attested by recent archaeological discovery—are eloquent proof of the architectural and decorative achievements of his time. It may be observed that at this juncture that Josephus does not try to veil his feelings but gives free vein to nostalgic feeling for the Temple.

261[*b*] *The structure* Titus tried, at least, to save the inner sanctuary, the *hēkhal,* which contained all the splendid cultic objects (described in *War* V, 208-218). That he did save them eventually is evident from the scenes engraved in the triumphal Arch of Titus in Rome and described in *War* VII, 145-152; see illustration there.

The golden-colored capital of a column, found in the debris of the Temple Mount, suggests the reason for Josephus' statement that "everything around them was made of gold" (264)



8. The Temple destroyed on the anniversary of the previous conflagration

(267) Deeply as one must mourn the destruction of the most wonderful edifice ever seen or spoken of, whether for its structure, size, and lavish perfection of detail, or the repute of its holy places, yet we may find very real comfort in the thought that fate is inexorable, not only in regard to living beings but also in regard to structures and places. (268) We may wonder, too, at the accuracy of the cycle of fate [*c*]; for it awaited, as I said [*c*], the very month and day on which the Temple had been burned by the Babylonians [*c*]. (269) From its first foundation by King Solomon to its present destruction, which occurred in the second year of Vespasian's reign, was a period of one thousand one hundred and thirty years, seven months, and fifteen days; (270) from its rebuilding in the second year of the reign of Cyrus, for which Haggai was responsible [*d*], to its capture under Vespasian, was six hundred and thirty-nine years and forty-five days [*d*].

Chapter V

1. The scenes of horror and massacre attending the fire

(271) While the Temple was ablaze, the attackers plundered it, and countless people who were caught by them were slaughtered. There was no pity for age and no regard was accorded rank; children and old men, laymen and priests, alike were butchered; every class was pursued and crushed in the grip of war, whether they cried out for mercy or offered resistance. (272) Through the roar of the flames streaming far and wide, the groans of the falling victims were heard; such was the height of the hill and the magnitude of the blazing pile that the entire city seemed to be ablaze; and the noise—nothing more deafening and frightening could be imagined. (273) There were the war cries of the Roman legions as they swept onwards en masse, the yells of the rebels encircled by fire and sword, the panic of the people who, cut off above, fled into the arms of the enemy, and their shrieks as they met their fate. (274) The cries on the hill blended with those of the multitudes in the city below; and now many people who were exhausted and tongue-tied as a result of hunger, when they beheld the Temple on fire, found strength once more to lament and wail. Peraea and the surrounding hills [*a*], added their echoes to the deafening din [*b*]. But more horrifying than the din were the sufferings. (275) The Temple Mount, everywhere enveloped in flames, seemed to be boiling over from its base; yet the blood seemed more abundant than the flames and the numbers of the slain greater than those of the slayers [*c*]. (276) The ground could not be seen anywhere between the corpses; the soldiers climbed over heaps of bodies as they chased the fugitives. (277) The rebel horde managed with difficulty to push through the Romans, and to break

265[*a*] *The troops* Titus withdrew after entering the sanctuary, and this apparently gave Roman soldiers a chance to dash through and ignite the edifice.

265[*b*] *The hinges of the gate* Since no fire can spread through hinges, however large, the gap along the hinged edges of the gate is probably intended, where wood could more easily ignite. Instead of putting out the fire, they inserted new firebrands wherever possible, and the whole magnificent edifice fell prey to the flames, with no hope of being saved. We have drawn attention above (167[*f*]) to the wooden structure of the basilical portico roofs; this accounts for the rapid spread of the fire throughout all the high porticoes and gates as well as the upper part of the Temple.

268[*c*] *A cycle of fate; the symmetry of the anniversary date of the double burning of the Temple* Faithful to the tradition that equated the 9th of Ab in the double burning (cf. 250[*a*]), Josephus regards it as another proof of inexorable fate and authenticates his own calculations (part of which also appeared in his *Antiquities*).

270[*d*] *Haggai... responsible* His estimates are based on assumptive dates of the building of the First Temple by King Solomon, of the Second Temple in Haggai's and Zerubbabel's time, and of their respective destructions. It is also likely that his totals, as written by his Greek translators in Roman figures, may have been another source of error. According to modern chronological study, Solomon began building his temple in 964 BC, according to the date accepted by most scholars, and it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar's army on or about the 9th-10th of Ab (Sept.) 586 BC. The return from the Babylonian Exile occurred forty-eight years later, and the building of the modest Second Temple by Zerubbabel (in Haggai's time) dates to 520-515 BC. The Second Temple was destroyed on the 8th-10th of Ab (Sept. AD 70).

274[*a*] *Surrounding hills* These could hardly be the distant hills beyond Jordan, namely Peraea, as given in some translations, but most likely the hills beyond the Mount of Olives range, which overlook both Jerusalem and the hills east of Jordan.

274[*b*] *The deafening din* and the echoes from the hills are also alluded to in the description of the fall of Jotapata (*War* III, 247-250). All told,

A carved section of one of the Temple pillars. It was used later in a Byzantine construction on the Temple Mount. Six to seven centuries later, the Arabs reused the huge blocks, columns, and pillars for their construction on the site

the description of the burning Temple is truly awesome and compelling.

275[*c*] *Slayers* While the Romans butchered all who fell into their hands, they apparently fanned the terrible conflagration and spared no one; (cf. 281 ff.). A Roman's description (Dio Cassius in his *History of Rome,* LXVI, 6) depicts the tragic heroism of the Jews on this occasion, in deeming themselves fortunate indeed to sacrifice their lives before the sacred Temple. The common folk stood by in the lower courts, the members of the council on the steps, and the priests in the inner sanctuary. Though few in number compared to the masses of their foes, they did not yield until several sections of the Temple complex were on fire.

277[*d*] Their tragic fate is described in 283[*c*] below.

278[*e*] *The spikes* set on the roof were intended to scare away crows and other unclean birds. The present Islamic *Dome-of-the-Rock* is likewise topped by a rod surmounted by the Crescent.

279[*f*] *Eight cubits wide* The roof to which the priests withdrew was narrower than the sanctuary beneath (*War* V, 221); later they withdrew to the four-meter wide wall of the Ḥēl.

280[*g*] *Belgas,* namely *Belaga* or *Delaya,* in Hebrew, were the names of two well-known priestly courses or "watches" *(mishmārot)* mentioned in *Mishna Succoth* 4, etc. Most of the ordinary priests did not live in Jerusalem and each course went up for one week's period of service, then returned home. During their sojourn in Jerusalem they slept in the lower underground precincts of the Temple Mount complex, awaiting the call at dawn for the morning services (B. Mazar, *ibid.,* p. 107-108). Most of the underground halls and galleries have since been replaced by the Islamic (Haram es-Sherif's) cisterns which are extant (*ibid.,* p. 128-129) as illustrated. The Talmudic sources frequently speak of the loyalty of the priests to the Temple and their great devotion during these difficult times (*Antiq.* XIV, 65-67; III, 321). The self-immolation of the priests and laymen, as described, expressed more eloquently than all other deeds their supreme loyalty to the Temple and all it represented.

281[*a*] *The surrounding buildings* were all the structures on the upper platform (on the Ḥēl) as shown in the diagram.

282[*b*] *The treasury* and other chambers (see Temple plan) were situated on three sides of the inner courts and were used for the storage of ceremonial property; they may have included certain wealth deposited there for safety (cf. also *Antiq.* XIX, 294). This should not be confused with the treasury-shaped receptacle for alms and offerings situated in the Women's Court (Mark 12, 41 ff.), nor with the more distant Temple stores situated in the southern underground and accessible only through the southern gates of the Temple Mount, later known as Solomon's Stables.

283[*c*] Apparently, the southern Royal Portico which may be identified with the *Ḥanuyot,* a three-story structure mounted on vast columns mentioned in the Talmud *Sanhedrin* 41, 2; *Aboda Zara* 8, 2, the vast proportions of which are described in *War* V, 190-192). See note 166[*c*] on the timbered roofs of the porticoes, and illustration.

284[*d*] *The soldiers* It is also possible to perceive in this insincere expression a covert defense of Titus, as though to say the army burned a city that was doomed anyway. Nevertheless, the Romans fanned the conflagration and spared no one.

285[*a*] *False prophet* Josephus digresses at this point—up to para. 315—to allude to various portents that he wanted to place on record as having deluded the common folk and led them to their self-destruction. Another false prophet foretold immediate deliverance to those prepared to follow him to the Temple court and thus led six thousand people to their death; see following notes.

287[*b*] *Expectations* This appears to be another indication of the undying messianic beliefs that bolstered people's courage in expectation of the Day of Judgment. Such portents seemed to echo Joel's prophecies (3, 3). "It is clear from these texts, and the Gospel *logion* warning against pseudo-prophets, that from the middle of the 1st century AD to the end of the first revolt these self-proclaimed wonderworkers found a ready following among the simple victims of the revolutionary activities of the Zealots. But as the promises remained unfulfilled and the miracles failed to materialize, and as the sarcasm and antipathy of their political opponents stripped the pretenders of their repute, the term 'prophet' applied to an individual between the years AD 50 and 70 not surprisingly acquired distinctly pejorative overtones in the bourgeois and aristocratic idiom of the Pharisees and Sadducees" (G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew,* p. 98).

through to the outer courts of the Temple Mount and from there to the city, while the surviving populace took refuge on the outer porticoes [*d*]. (278) Some of the priests at first tore out from the Temple roof the spikes with their lead sockets [*e*] and hurled them at the Romans; (279) but subsequently, as they did not achieve anything and the flames leaped towards them, they withdrew to the wall, which was eight cubits [*f*] wide, and stayed there. (280) However, two men of note, who were in a position either to save their lives by going over to the Romans or to stay there and face the same fate as the others, threw themselves into the fire and were consumed with the Temple; they were Meirus son of Belgas, and Josephus son of Dalaeus [*g*].

2. Burning of the surrounding area and destruction of the people

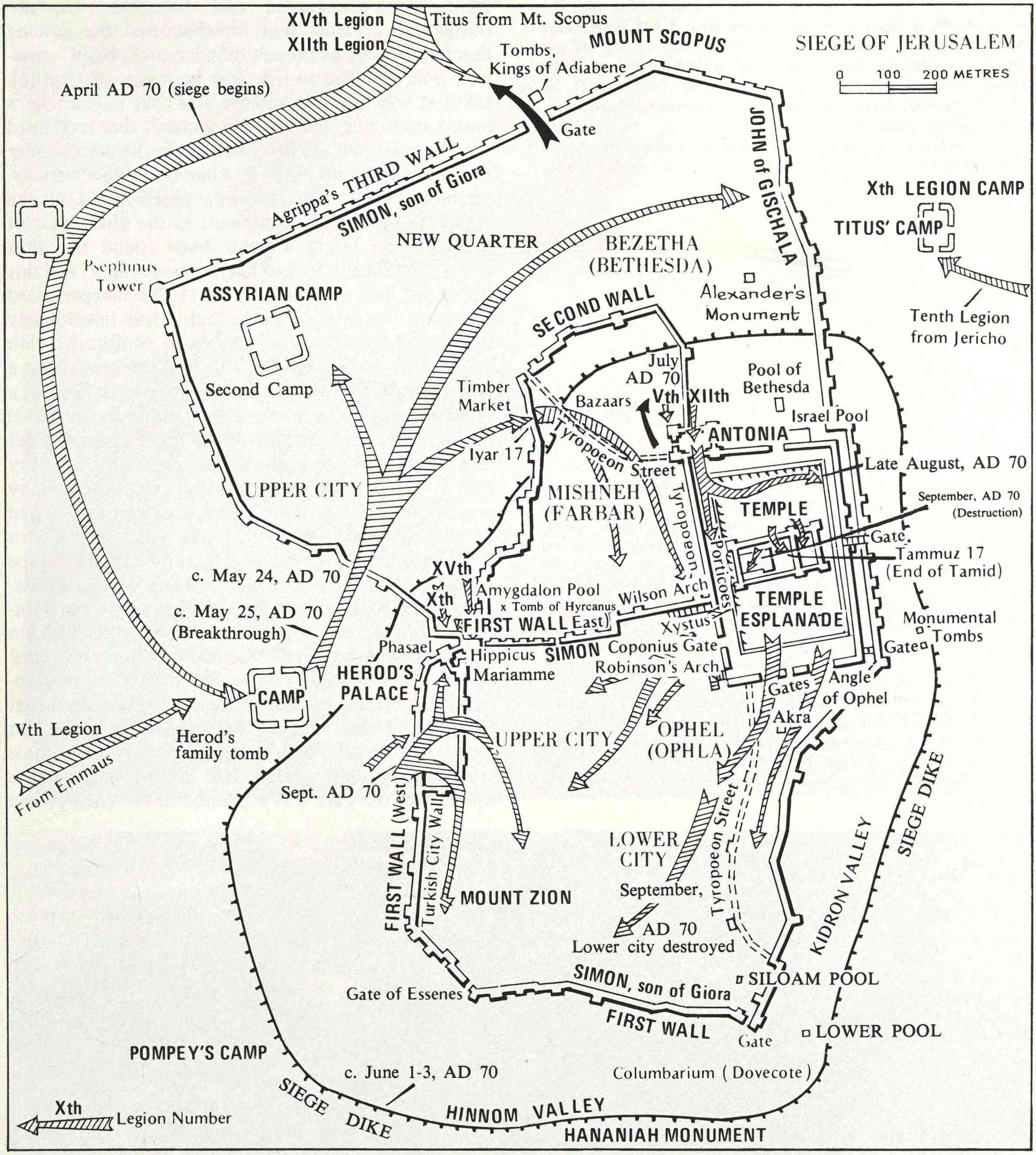
(281) The Romans, deeming it useless to spare the surrounding buildings [*a*] now that the Temple was in flames, set fire to them all, both of what remained of the porticoes and all the gates, except two, one of the east gates and the southern gate, both of which were later demolished. (282) They burned also the treasury-chambers [*b*], which contained huge sums of money, vast quantities of raiment, and other precious belongings; here, in fact, was the general depository of Jewish wealth, where the rich had brought the contents of their dismantled homes for safe keeping. (283) They now reached the last surrounding portico [*c*] of the outer court, on top of which poor women and children of the populace and a mixed multitude, numbering six thousand, had found refuge. (284) Before Caesar could reach any decision or give any orders to his officers as regards these people, the soldiers [*d*], carried away by their fury, set fire to the porticoes from below; consequently, many were killed as they threw themselves out of the flames, while others were consumed by the blaze; of all that multitude not a soul escaped.

The people deluded by false prophets

(285) The people owed their destruction to a false prophet [*a*] who had, on that very day, declared to the people of the city that God ordered them to go up to the Temple courts to receive there the signs of their deliverance. (286) Many prophets had been induced in these days by the rebel leaders to deceive the people by exhorting them to wait for help from God and thereby to reduce the flow of deserters, as well as buoy up with hope those who were beyond fear or precaution. (287) Man is quickly persuaded in adversity; and when the deceiver actually holds out a prospect of release from the prevailing horrors, the sufferer falls wholly prey to these expectations [*b*].

3. Portents and omens of the end of days

(288) This is how the unhappy people were beguiled at this stage by charlatans and false messengers of God,



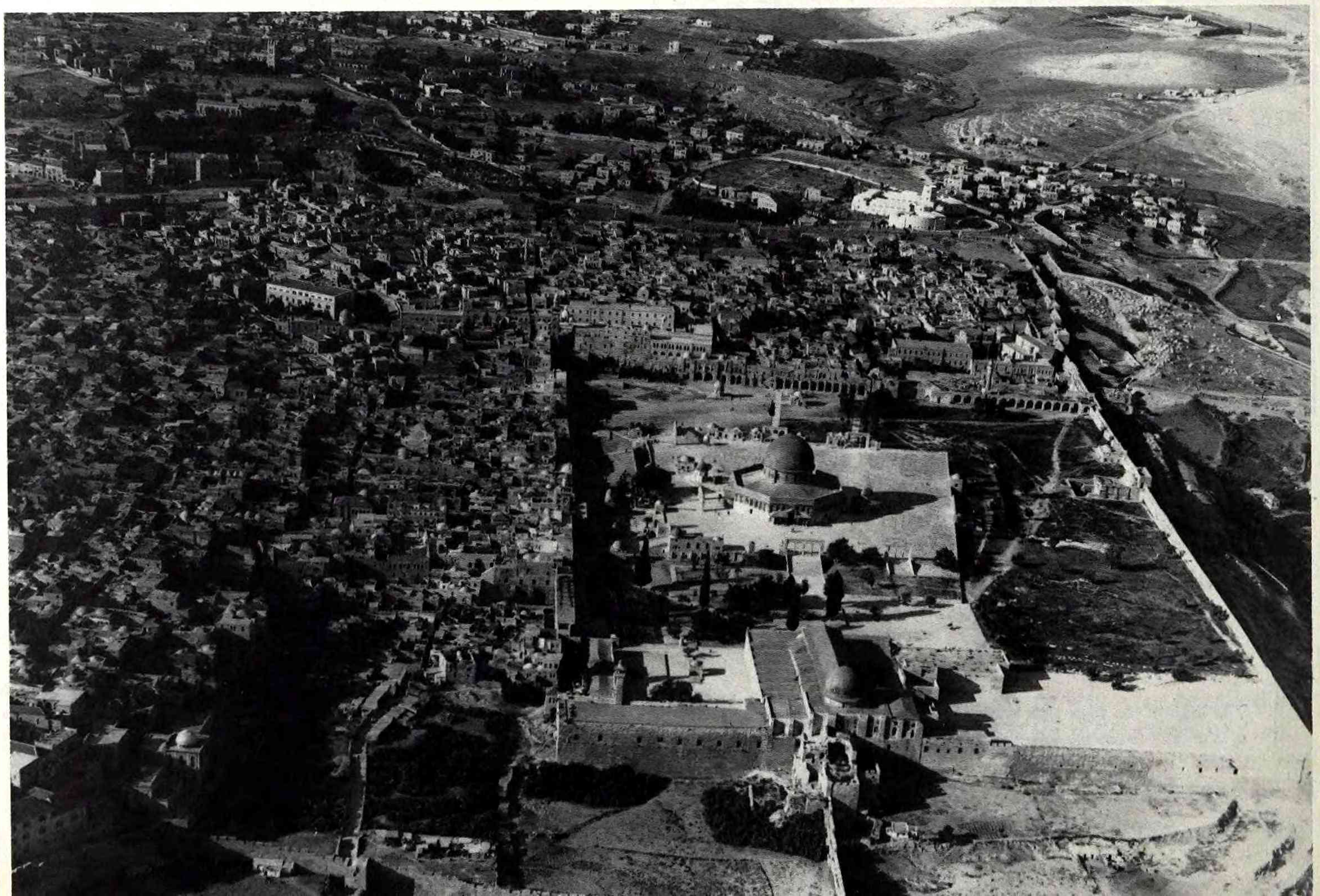
The map of the siege with dates corresponding approximately to the Gregorian calendar is shown here in order to recapitulate the stages of the war in Jerusalem, including the final destruction of the Temple, as it ends on the tragic notes of para. 274 ff.

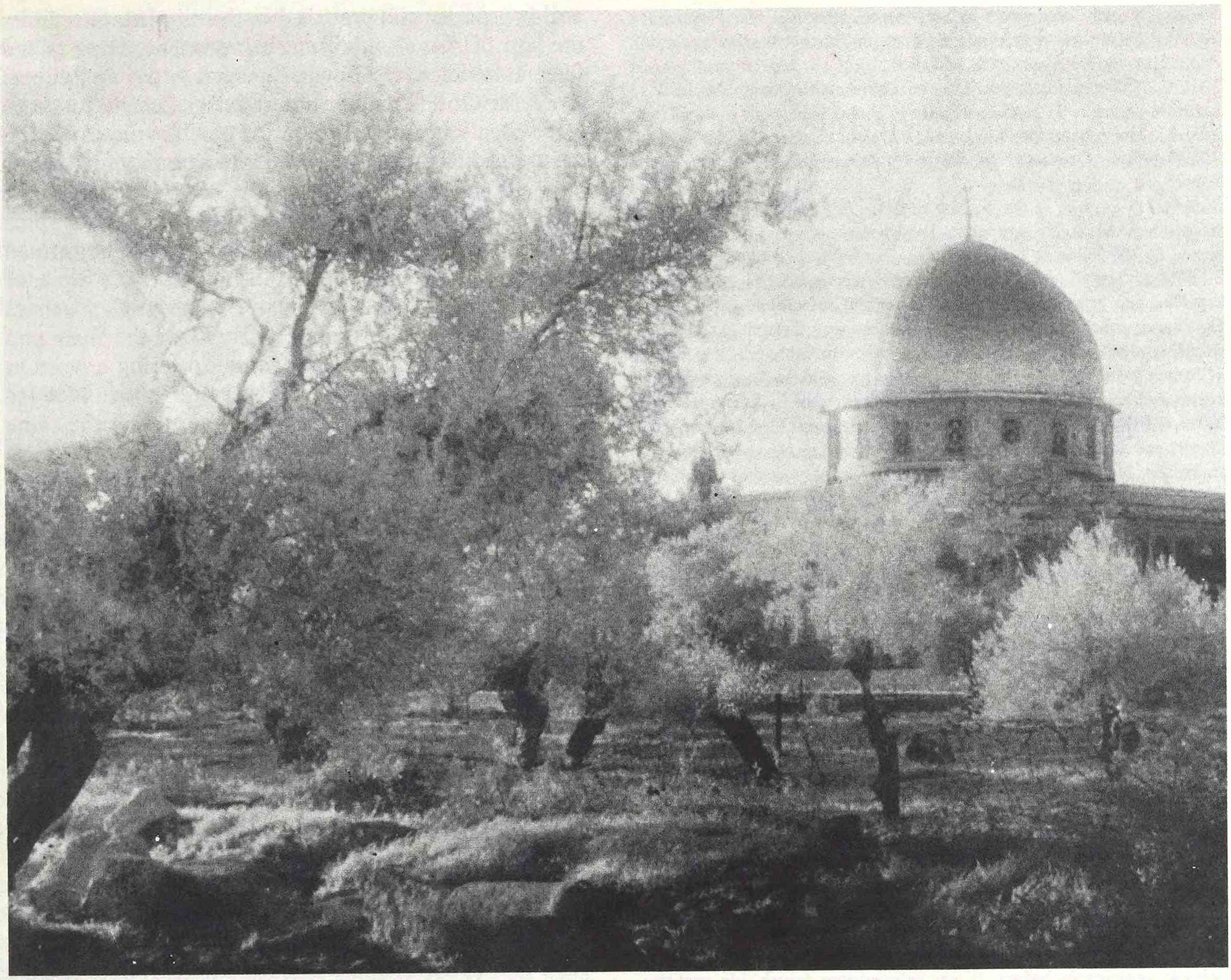
288[*c*]-290[*a*] *Portents* Apparently on the 8th of April or May AD 65 or 66 (8th of Nisan in the Jewish calendar) at 3 AM. Several days before the feast of Passover, which began on Nisan 15, the city was already full of pilgrims who were cleansing themselves or had come early in order to spend extra time in Jerusalem (cf. John 11, 55; Acts 21, 26-27). The heavenly occurrence may have been a natural phenomenon, though greatly exaggerated.

291[*b*] *Subsequent events* Josephus goes even further and censures the people of Jerusalem for not giving heed to clear portents that foretold doom; cf. VI, 110.

while they disregarded and disbelieved the unmistakable portents that foreshadowed the coming desolation, and, as though thunderstuck, blind, senseless, paid no heed to the clear warnings of God [*c*]. (289) It was like this when a star that looked like a sword stood over the city and a comet that continued for a whole year. (290) Then again, before the war and the events that led to it, while the people were assembling for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, on the eighth of the month Xanthicus, at the ninth hour of the night so bright a light shone round the altar and Temple that it looked like broad daylight; and this lasted for half an hour [*a*]. (291) The inexperienced regarded it as a good omen, but it was immediately interpreted by the sacred scribes in conformity with subsequent events [*b*]. (292) During the same feast a cow brought by someone for sacrifice gave birth to a lamb [*c*] right in the midst of the Temple courts; (293) furthermore, the east gate of the inner sanctuary [*d*] was a very massive gate made of brass and so heavy that it could scarcely be moved every evening by twenty men; it was fastened by iron-bound bars and secured by bolts that were sunk very deep into a threshold that was fashioned from a single stone block; yet this gate was seen to open on its own accord at the sixth hour of the night [*d*]. (294) The Temple guards ran and reported the news to the captain [*a*] and he came up and by strenuous efforts managed to close it [*b*]. (295) To the uninitiated this also appeared to be the best of omens as they assumed that God had opened to them the gate of happiness. But wiser people realized that the security of the Temple was breaking down of its own accord and that the opening of the gate was a present to the enemy; and

Though Islamic tradition insists that Solomon's Temple and Herod's Temple stood on the site of the "Dome of the Rock" in the center of the vast higher platform, bordered by its arcades, the actual location of the ancient shrine has remained a moot point. Most people favor the popular belief and argue that "it must be there." But a number of scholars are not convinced. A problem became apparent to G. Cornfeld and Professor M. Avi-Yonah: The raised platform on which the Dome stands was built at the level of the rocky top of Mount Moriah and it appears to have encompassed the ancient inner walls of the Temple courts proper, as described by Josephus; however, from observations made in 1969-1970, in the trenches that were dug up immediately around the Dome *for an overhaul of the water-pipe network throughout the platform, it appeared that the ground at a depth of 1-2 m. showed no signs of fire and destruction. This leaves the problem wide open, while it suggests to some that the Temple stood somewhere on that platform, if not on the traditional hallowed site. The Moslems have not allowed excavation or other research to be made on the premises. The future will probably decide the issue*





The Dome of the Rock in the late afternoon of a spring day when the olive trees—below the platform—are in bloom. This is a view from the east. In ancient times the historic Temple stood somewhere on this platform, facing east

they interpreted this in their own minds as a portent of coming desolation [*c*].

Supernatural apparitions

(296) Then again, not many days after the feast, on the twenty-first of the month of Artemisium [*a*], a supernatural apparition was seen, too amazing to be believed. (297) What I am now to relate would, I imagine, have been dismissed as imaginary, had this not been vouched for by eyewitnesses, then followed by subsequent disasters that deserved to be thus signalized. (298) For before sunset chariots were seen in the air over the whole country, and armed battalions speeding through the clouds and encircling the cities. (299) Then again, at the feast called Pentecost, when the priests had entered the inner courts of the Temple by night to perform their usual ministrations, they declared that they were aware, first, of a violent commotion and din, then of a voice as of a host crying, "We are departing hence."

Jesus' woeful outcries four years before the war

(300) A portent still more alarming had appeared four years before the war at a time when profound peace

292[*c*] *Give birth to a lamb* A calf born of a pregnant cow led to slaughter was probably mistaken for a lamb.

293[*d*] *The reputed supernatural opening of the gate* The gate referred to is the *Nicanor gate,* which gave access to the inner court. It is known that on the pilgrimage festivals the gates of the Temple were opened to the people at midnight. The reported extraordinary occurrence (also echoed by Tacitus, *"apertae repente delubri fores," ibid.)* is also mentioned in an obscure dissertation on an extra-Mishnaic halakha (ordinance) relating to omens (*Yoma* 39, 72).

294[*a*] *The captain* Cf. *War* I, 652; of priestly status, he was in charge of the Temple guard, and his duties were similar in rabbinic tradition and the New Testament (Acts 4, 1; 5, 24-26).

294[*b*] It is known that the gatekeepers who closed all the gates and remained on guard numbered about two hundred men.

295[*c*] *Portent of desolation* In the light of the burning of the Temple and the annihilation of its potent symbolism to all Jews everywhere, theirs was the agony of despair and spiritual vacuum.

296[*a*] *Artemisium* Approx. July/Iyar 21, according to the Jewish calendar. This has been long debated by scholars and thought to have been embellished by its many reporters in the course of the ages.

and prosperity still prevailed in the city [*a*]. One Jesus the son of Ananias, an uncouth peasant, came to the feast at which every Jew is expected to put up a tabernacle for God [*b*]; as he stood in the Temple [courts], he suddenly began to cry out: (301) "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the sanctuary, a voice against the bridegroom and the bride [*c*], a voice against the whole people." Day and night he uttered this cry as he went about all the alleys. (302) Some of the leading citizens, seriously annoyed at these ominous pronouncements, laid hold of the man and beat him savagely. But he, without uttering a word in his own defense, or for the private information of those were beating him, persisted in uttering the same warnings as before. (303) Thereupon, the magistrates, rightly concluding that some supernatural impulse was responsible for his behavior, took him before the Roman governor [*d*]. (304) There, although flayed to the bone with scourges, he neither begged for mercy nor shed a tear, but raising his voice to a most mournful cry, answered every stroke with "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" [*e*]. (305) When Albinus, the governor, asked him who he was and whence he came and why he uttered these cries, he made no reply whatever, but endlessly repeated his dirge over the city, until Albinus released him because he judged him insane [*f*]. (306) Throughout this time, until the war broke out, he never approached another citizen nor was he seen talking to any, but daily, like a prayer that he had memorized, he recited his lament "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" (307) He never cursed any of those who beat him from day to day nor did he thank those who gave him food; his only response to anyone was that melancholy prediction. (308) His voice was heard most of all at the festivals [*a*]. So, for seven years and five months [*b*] he continued his wail, his voice as strong as ever and his vigor unabated, till, during the siege, after seeing the fulfillment of his foreboding, he was silenced. (309) He was going his rounds, shouting in penetrating tones from the wall, "Woe, woe once more to the city, and the people and the Temple"; then, when he added a last word, "and woe to me also!" a stone hurled from the ballista struck him, killing him on the spot. Thus, with those same forebodings still upon his lips, he met his end.

4. The oracles

(310) Anyone who ponders these things will find that God does care for people, and by all sorts of ways shows his people the means of salvation, while it is to folly and evils of their own choosing that they owe their destruction. (311) Thus the Jews, after the demolition of the Antonia, reduced the Temple [area] to a tetragon, though their oracles warned them that when the Temple would become four square [*c*], the city and the Temple would fall. (312) But what incited them more than anything else to the war was an equivocal oracle [*d*] also found in their sacred scrip-

300[*a*] Namely, four years before AD 66, when the war began.

300[*b*] *Tabernacle* or Sukkoth, the Feast of Tabernacles (Pentecost) in AD 62 as appears from para. 308.

301[*c*] *Bridegroom... bride* The refrain is taken from Jeremiah's beautiful poem in 7, 34 ff.

303[*d*] The procurator Albinus (AD 62-64; cf. *War* II, 272-276).

304[*e*] *Woe* is repeated in old and modern Hebrew usage (*"Oy-ve'avoy!"*).

305[*f*] *Treatment of the prophet of woe.* The leaders of the people handed him over to the procurator, though they considered him one possessed by the Spirit of God and hence not subject to punishment according to Jewish custom. The procurator released him because he regarded him insane and harmless. As regards the grounds of his trial, D. Flusser concludes that Jewish authorities were wont to believe that people who publicly prophesied disasters were a threat to public security. If Jeshua were handed over to the procurator because he prophesied a national disaster, it may be presumed that his prophecies could adversely affect the Roman statute that protected native worship throughout the empire and would be regarded as injurious to faith and to the holy places in Judaea. In the trial of Jesus, the Gospels do not say that the priests who handed him over to Pilate accused him of proclaiming publicly the destruction of the Temple, but this remains probable because the first question that the high priest had put to him was whether he had made such a statement about the destruction of the Temple, while the second question was whether he considered himself the Messiah, the latter not being the main concern. But the Gospels were mainly interested in stressing the Messiahship of Jesus (D. Flusser, p. 133; see also our appendix on the *Testimonium Flavianum* in *Antiquities*).

308[*a*] *At the festivals* At the sites where they were celebrated by the people.

308[*b*] He started lamenting at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles (AD 62). The figure of seven years and five months is incorrect, since the siege of Jerusalem had begun seven years and six months after the feast.

311[*c*] *Foursquare* After making the Temple foursquare by demolishing the tower Antonia, the Temple was destined to be destroyed according to an oracle, whose present identity is unknown.

312[*d*] *Ruler of the world* An equivocal oracle. The Jewish belief in the uniqueness of the people of Israel and their divine election lent strength to their opposition to foreign rule. This belief found expression as well in an eschatological-messianic hope that pervaded the socio-political agitation in Judaea. It was believed that Jewish rule over the whole world was on its way. This explains also the words of Josephus himself who, generally speaking, was very careful not to broach messianic themes openly; whence his statement on the ambiguous oracle.

The Feast of Tabernacles requires these orthodox Jews to pick their citron (ethrog) *and leaves for the synagogue service*

tures, announcing that at that time a man from their country would become ruler of the world [*d*]. (313) This they took to mean someone of their own race, and many of their scholars misinterpreted it, when in fact the oracle pointed to the accession of Vespasian who was proclaimed emperor. (314) For all that, it is impossible for people to escape their fate even if they see it coming. (315) The Jews interpreted some of these prophecies to suit themselves and treated the others with contempt, till the fall of their country and their own destruction proved their folly.

Chapter VI

Titus hailed imperator

1. (316) As the rebels had fled into the city, and flames were consuming the sanctuary itself and all its surroundings, the Romans brought their standards into the Temple court, and, erecting them opposite the Eastern gate [*a*], they sacrificed to them there, and with thundering acclamations hailed Titus imperator [*b*]. (317) So laden with plunder was every soldier that throughout Syria the value of gold was reduced by half. (318) With the priests still holding out on the outer wall of the sanctuary [*c*] was a lad parched with thirst, who begged the Roman guards to give him safe conduct and confessed his great thirst. (319) They felt sorry for his youth and distress and granted him safe conduct. He came down and drank and drank, then filled with water the vessel he had brought, and dashed back to his friends above. (320) The guards failed to stop him and cursed him for breaking his word; he retorted that he had broken no covenant, for the agreement was not that he should stay with them, but only that he should descend and get some water. He had done both these things and he considered that he had not broken his word.

The execution of priests

(321) Such cunning in one so young astounded the Romans who had been outwitted. However, on the fifth day the starving priests came down and were taken to Titus by the guards, whom they implored to spare their lives. (322) He replied that the time for pardon was past, that the one thing that might have justified their being spared was gone, and that it was the duty of priests to perish with their Temple; he then ordered their executions [*a*].

2. Simon and John's wish to parley with Titus

(323) The tyrants and their followers, beaten every way in the war and surrounded by a wall [*b*] that prevented any possibility of escape, invited Titus to a parley. (324) Urged by his innate humanity to save the town in any case and encouraged by his friends, who presumed that the brigands had at last been brought to reason [*c*], Titus took his stand on the west of the outer court of the Temple. (325) Here, above the

316[*a*] *The eastern gate* of the Temple Mount precincts faced the Kidron valley and the Mount of Olives. It was at a lower level than the blazing Temple, and the Romans deliberately fanned the conflagration so that nothing could be spared. Josephus emphasizes at this point that the Temple was not only ruined but also desecrated by the ritual act that the legionaries performed there. The standards of the legion were sacred objects to Gentiles, tantamount to the cult image of the gods, and sacrifices could be offered to them. It is significant that in the *Commentary on Habakkuk* discovered at Qumran (Col. VI, II, 4 f.) the *Kittim,* i.e. the Romans, are distinguished as sacrificing to their "standards" and their arms. For a Jew, such an act was "the abomination of desolation," no less than Antiochus' desecration of the Temple (cf. *War* I, 19, 31-38).

316[*b*] *Titus hailed imperator* The Temple had not yet burned out before the legions hailed Titus *imperator*. While this title was commonly accorded victorious generals by their troops, Suetonius cities rumors, which he discounts, that Titus was suspected of wishing to defect from his father, Vespasian, and wanting to make himself the independent ruler of the eastern section of the empire. This did not materialize, but Titus' victory was immortalized by his *triumph* (*War* VII, 132-157) and, after his death, by the present Arch of Titus in Rome, as illustrated in Book VII.

318[*c*] Cf. *War* VI, 279 above.

322[*a*] The author does not try to whitewash Titus in this case. All commentators have remarked on the cruelty of executing non-combatant priests.

323[*b*] *Wall* The circumvallating dike, around Jerusalem. Cf. *War* V, 502 and map of the siege. While the Romans butchered all who fell into their hands and fanned the flames of the Temple, John of Gischala with his Zealot band managed to escape through underground passages, namely the dry rain-sewers, into the Upper City, the final sanctuary of the besieged.

324[*c*] *Brought to reason* The Romans felt that the conquest of Jerusalem was completed, and Titus expressed himself accordingly in his address. But, in fact, the final destruction of the Temple did not mean that the conquest was completed. The Upper City, the final sanctuary of the besieged, still remained to be taken. This was the situation as the protagonists faced each other.

The value of gold was gauged in the market of Tyre (Syria) as evidenced by this half-shekel coin; the god Melkart of Tyre appears on the obverse and the eagle on the reverse

Vivid scene of a sacrifice (suovetaurilla) *showing the long procession with the animals, in appropriate order, winding its way around a fort toward the altar, where the veiled priest stands with the horn players, ready to sound the fanfare to scare away the evil spirits. Doctors and medical orderlies stand by (from Trajan's Column, Rome)*

Xystus, were gates [*d*] and a bridge that linked the Temple to the Upper City and now separated the tyrants from Caesar. (326) The multitude gathered in crowds on either side: the Jews around Simon and John, buoyed up with hopes of pardon, and the Romans beside Caesar, eager to hear their appeal. (327) Titus, after charging his troops to control their rage and their missiles and placing an interpreter beside him, exercised his privilege as conqueror [*e*] and addressed them first.

Titus' address

(328) "Are you now sated, sirs, with the sufferings of your country: You, who in utter disregard of our strength and your own weakness, have, through reckless rage and madness, lost your people and destroyed your city and your Temple and are yourselves justly doomed to die; (329) you who from the very first, from the day you were crushed by Pompey's forces [*f*], never stopped rebelling, and now have made open war on Rome? Did you rely on numbers? (330) Why, a small fraction of the Roman forces sufficed to deal with you. Or did you rely on the fidelity of your allies? And which of the nations outside our empire would prefer Jews to Romans? Or on

325[*d*] *Gates... above the Xystus* This refers to the third gate in the Western Wall, and the Eastern Wall, and at the Eastern end of the elevated causeway, which "in the fourth year of the rebellion served to separate the two rival commanders, John of Gischala and Simon-bar-Giora. Each of them erected a tower at his end of the passage" (B. Mazar, p. 92; cf. *War* VI, 191; II, 344; V, 144; VI, 191, 377). The causeway that spanned the Tyropoeon linked the Upper City with the Temple esplanade. Gates stood at both ends of the causeway, and below it lay the Xystus compound, "a porticoed plaza paved with flagstones, and used for public assemblies. It faced the wide expanse of the Western Wall, between the present 'Barclay Gate' and the point where the plaza meets the First Wall, south of the causeway which passed over the Tyropoeon, namely the Wilson Arch" (B. Mazar, *ibid.*, p. 215). The Zealots took up their position at the western end of the causeway while Titus stood over the eastern end opening onto the esplanade, already wholly occupied by the Romans. One can still see remains of the pillars and arches (some reconstructed by the Arabs) that supported the open causeway at the eastern end and terminated under the Wilson Arch (see illustration) below text of V, 144-145).

327[*e*] *As conqueror,* and confident that Jerusalem had already fallen, cf. 324[*c*] above.

329[*f*] *Pompey's forces* Cf. *War* I, 127-158.

your physical strength, perhaps? (331) You are surely aware that the Germans are our slaves. Or perhaps on the solidity of your walls? But what wall could be a better obstacle than the ocean which surrounds Britain, and yet it was brought to its knees by Roman arms! (332) Or is it your invincible determination and the clever strategy of your generals? (333) Yet you must have known that even Carthage was overwhelmed. No, you were incited to rebel against the Romans by Roman kindness. First, we let you occupy this land and set over you kings of your own blood [*g*]; (334) then we upheld the laws of your forefathers and allowed you full control over your internal and external affairs. (335) Above all, we permitted you to raise taxes for God [*a*] and to collect offerings, and we neither discouraged nor interfered with those who brought them, so that you could grow richer at our expense and make preparations with our money to make war on us! (336) Then, enjoying such privileges, you used your abundance against the donors and, like untameable reptiles, you spat your venom on the hand that fed you. (337) No doubt, you held Nero's indulgence in contempt and, like fractures or sprains, you remained quiescent but malevolent for a time, but when a more serious malady [*b*] broke out, you came out into the open and let your unbounded ambitions soar into shameless presumption. (338) My father came to this country, not to punish you for the rebellion under Cestius [*c*], but to caution you. (339) If he had come to destroy the nation, the proper thing would have been to go straight to the root of your strength and sack this city at once, whereas in fact he proceeded to ravage Galilee and outlying districts, giving you time to repent. (340) But you took his humanity for weakness, and our clemency only served to nurse your audacity. (341) When Nero died, you behaved like the worst of peoples, emboldened by our internal troubles, and when my father and I had departed for Egypt, you jumped at the chance, preparing for war and shamelessly harassing those who have now become emperors, and whose humanity you had known as generals. (342) When the whole empire came to us for protection and all its people were enjoying tranquility throughout and foreign nations were sending embassies to congratulate us, once again the Jews rose in arms. (343) You sent embassies to your friends beyond the Euphrates [*d*] to stir up revolt; you rebuilt your fortifications; there were seditions, contentions of tyrants, and civil war—exactly what suited men so base. (344) I came to this city bearing somber injunctions that my reluctant father gave me. But when I heard that the citizens were peace-minded, I was delighted. (345) As for you, I begged you to desist before hostilities began; I spared you long after you had begun. I gave pledges of protection to deserters and kept faith with them when they deserted to me. I showed pity for many prisoners and forbade those who wanted to torture them. I brought up my engines to your walls most reluctantly. I kept back my

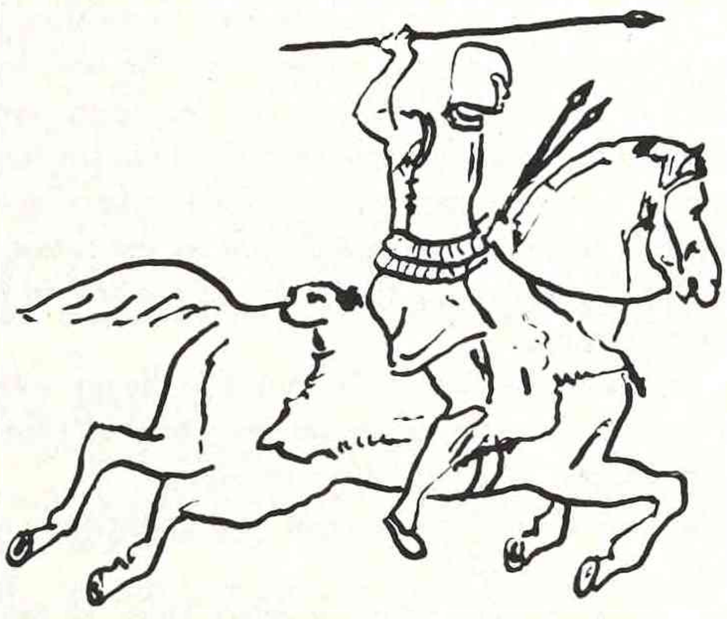
333[*g*] *Your own blood,* that is, the Herodian dynasty.

335[*a*] *Taxes for God,* namely, the annual levy paid by all Jews of Palestine and the Diaspora for the maintenance of the Temple.

337[*b*] *Malady* This refers to the time when the Jews, during the disturbances and disorders in the Roman empire attending Nero's death, seized the occasion to rebel (cf. introductory paragraphs in *War* I, 4). The speech is, of course, a paraphrase of the general's words by Josephus.

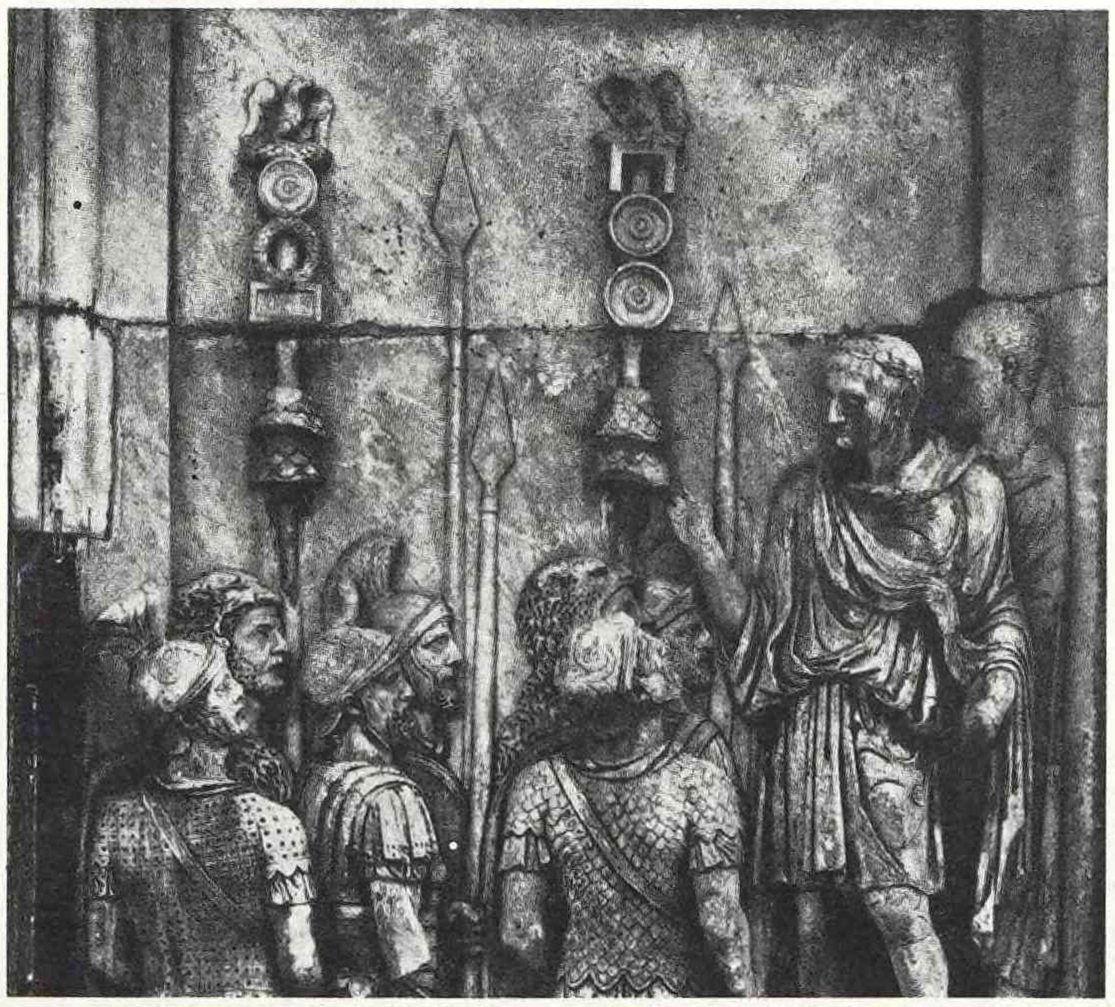
338[*c*] *Rebellion under Cestius,* as related in *War* II, 499 ff.

343[*d*] *Your friends beyond the Euphrates* The existence of a Jewish state in the kingdom of Adiabene beyond the Euphrates, of necessity affected Rome's eastern policy. It helped to bolster the self-confidence of the Jews of Palestine who, at the beginning of the Great Revolt, expected to receive tangible support from this source and apparently sent embassies there to urge action. Members of the royal family of Adiabene in fact took part in the revolt, from the struggle with Cestius, mentioned above, right to the very end (cf. *War* II 520; VI; 356); but officially Adiabene abstained from open military intervention.



Roman cavalryman

The standards and eagles were sacred objects to the Roman soldiers, who worshiped and made sacrifices to them as described in para. 316



Coin dating to the last years preceding the destruction of the Temple, bearing the image of Emperor Nero, a contemporary of the war

soldiers who were thirsting for your blood. After every victory—as if I had suffered a defeat—I invited you to make peace. (346) When I approached the Temple, I deliberately contravened the laws of war [*e*], appealing to you to spare your own shrines and to preserve the Temple for yourselves, offering unmolested egress and a guarantee of safety, or, if you so wished, the opportunity to fight on some other ground. You scorned all offers and set fire to your Temple [*f*] with your own hands.

(347) "After all this, you wretched people, do you now invite me to parley with you? What have you to save that can compare with what is lost? What protection do you think you deserve after losing your sanctuary? (348) Why, even now you stand fully armed, and not even at your last stand do you so much as pretend to be asking for mercy. You poor wretches, what are you relying on? (349) Is not your nation dead, your Temple gone, your city in my power, your very lives in my hands? Do you think you will win glory for your courage by putting off death till the last possible moment? (350) I, for one, will not compete with you in this frenzy. You can throw down your arms and surrender [*g*] your persons and I will grant you your lives, like the tolerant master of the house who punishes the incorrigible and spares the rest for himself."

3. Titus' offer rejected

(351) To this they replied that they could accept no pledge from him, as they had sworn never to do so [*a*], but they asked permission to cross the encircling wall with their wives and children, whereupon they would go into the wilderness [*b*] and leave the city to him. (352) Titus, angry that men no better than prisoners should come forward with demands like victors, ordered by proclamation to them neither to desert nor

346[*e*] *Contravened the laws of war* Titus refers to his former attempt to conciliate the Jews and induce them to surrender when he delegated Josephus to address the beleaguered people of Jerusalem (*War* V, 361 ff) and his own address to John (VI, 126). For a general who commanded such an advantageous position in the war over a horde of besieged Jews, this seemed a considerable concession. But these offers were treated with derision by the Jews. We read below (VI, 353) that he would not forgive nor let them forget their rejection of this presumed conciliatory offer. The burden of the speech is the futility of the Jewish rebellion in the face of the Roman dominion over the world (this was Josephus' own theme) and an admonition against the rebels' aggressive and insane behavior from the start—behavior that had caused the Romans such serious alarm, brought on a cruel war, and ended in the destruction of the Temple. Having said this, Titus advised them to surrender unconditionally. According to Josephus, the Jewish people did not want war at all; it was forced on them by "robbers" and rebels. An entirely different picture of the complete participation of the whole people in the war is presented by Tacitus, an anti-Jewish historian; but every historical fact likely to support this view is omitted or interpreted differently by Josephus. In only one passage of Titus' speech to the Zealots does he mention the former view, which was undoubtedly current, namely, that the Jews were always the sworn enemies of Rome. A more serious defect in the speech is the probable distortion of the messianic movement in Judaism and its role in fanning the flames of war, doubtless an intentional perversion of the state of affairs, in order to represent the Jewish war as the action of limited circles with the aim of exonerating the nation as a whole in the eyes of the Roman administration.

346[*f*] *You... set fire to the Temple* He refers to the northwestern portico, connected with the Antonia, which the Jews burned, thus setting off the gradual conflagration of all the holy precincts.

350[*g*] *Surrender...* and trust me to treat you as leniently as I would deem fit (cf. note 353[*c*] below).

351[*a*] *Sworn... to do so* The rebels rejected Titus' pledge, as many knew they would face a death sentence.

351[*b*] *Wilderness* They asked him to grant them a free withdrawal into the eastern and sparsely inhabited part of the Judaean wilderness, an arrangement that had been the terms of surrender formerly granted to Jews who deserted the city (*War* VI, 113-120). They may have intended to take refuge in Masada (cf. *War* VII, 280 ff.).

353[*c*] *Governed by the laws of war* Whereas he appeared, according to Josephus, to be somewhat conciliatory on a former occasion (V, 351 ff) when he waived the mandatory "law of war," which would give the enemy no quarter, he now rejected their plea to leave the town, because he held them in his power, when he may have given the fateful order to burn the Temple. *Vei victis* ("woe to the defeated") ran the Roman saying. B. Mazar comments at this point that Titus was not convinced that the burning of the Temple and the breached walls of Jerusalem gave him full command of the city and its inhabitants *as long as the rebels continued fighting;* for he knew from past experience that the Zealots never surrendered, but fought to the death. Hence his "laws of war" seemed to give no other alternative than to destroy them utterly.

353[*d*] *City,* namely the Upper City, which rose west of the Temple Mount, and still remained to be taken, as well as the Lower City.

354[*a*] On the following day the Romans set fire to the Archives, or public records office *(Archāiā)* in the Lower City, south of the Temple Mount, where promissory notes to money lenders and contracts were registered and kept. This was "identified by some with the *Lishkat-hagazit* (Hall of Hewn Stone), where the Sanhedrin met before it was transferred to the Ḥanuyot, presumably in the basilica-like Southern (Royal) Portico" (B. Mazar, p. 213). This was the second time the archives were burned. The first fire was set by the Zealots to destroy the promissory notes filed there for safekeeping (*War* II, 427).

354[*b*] *The Akra,* a prominent site over the eastern hill of ancient Jerusalem (Lower City), probably south of the Temple Mount. It also

hope for terms any longer, for he would spare no one; (353) and that they should fight with all their might and save themselves if they could, because in the future all his actions would be strictly governed by the laws of war [*c*]. Then he gave his men leave to burn and sack the city [*d*]. (354) They did nothing that day, but on the next they set fire to the archives [*a*], the Akra [*b*], the council chamber [*c*], and the area called Ophlas [*d*]. (355) The fire spread as far as the palace of Queen Helena [*e*], situated in the center of the Akra, consuming the narrow streets and the houses full of the bodies of people who had died of starvation [*f*].

The fate of King Izates' kinsmen

(356) On the same day King Izates' sons and brothers, joined by many prominent citizens, begged Caesar to grant them a pledge of protection. Titus, though furious at all survivors, living up to his character, received them. (357) He kept them all in custody temporarily and later sent the king's sons and kinsmen [*a*] in chains to Rome as hostages for the allegiance of their country.

Chapter VII

The looting of the palace by the rebels

1. (358) The rebels made a rush toward the royal palace [*b*], which was so solidly built that many had stored their property there. After beating off the Romans, they slaughtered all the people who were

had apparently been the site of the Hellenistic garrison in pre-Hasmonean times, mentioned in *War* I, 39, 50 and V, 137 ff.; 253. According to Josephus, the Lower City extended over the eastern hill, which he identified with the Akra.

354[*c*] *The Council chamber* or *boulè,* distinct from the Municipal Council House, the Bouleterion, situated, according to some, between the Xystus (cf. 325[*d*] above) and the Temple Mount, or nearby in the Lower City, and located near the public thoroughfare, probably the Tyropoeon Road, where it was easily accessible (see map). Its ruins are as yet unknown.

354[*d*] *Ophlas* or *Ophel,* the upper part of the southern hill of Jerusalem situated close to the southern walls and gates of the Temple Mount. It is famed for its historic associations with the growth of biblical Jerusalem in the period of the kingdom of Judah. "The Ophel extended as far as the southeastern corner of the Temple Mount. The particular place called the 'Angle of the Ophel' was situated directly below the pinnacle of the Temple mentioned in Matthew 4, 5" (Mazar, pp. 214-215). In the above passage, in contrast to *War* V, 137, Acra comprises only part of the Lower City, which also included an area known as Ophlas (the nucleus of ancient Jerusalem). The Lower City was a larger area that included the Ophel, the southeastern end of the eastern hill, the slope extending to the Siloam pool and the First Wall. See illustrations of its excavations. (See illustrations in Book V.)

355[*e*] *Palace of Queen Helena* Situated in the heart of the Lower City (*War* V, 567) near Princess Grapte's house, which was used by John of Gischala as his headquarters. Queen Helena was a very devout and charitable converted Jewess, who brought relief to Jerusalem throughout her stay. She was interred in the pyramidal "Tombs of the Kings" north of Jerusalem, described in *Antiquities* XX, 4, 3. Cf. *War* I, 6; IV, 567 and illustrations in V, 47-61.

355[*f*] *Starvation* The flames spread to the streets and houses of the Lower City, south of the Ophel, as far as the Pool of Siloam, already the horrendous charnel of the victims of the prolonged famine described in *War* V, 424 ff; VI, 192-213. The sequel of the capture of Jerusalem is continued in para. 358.

357[*a*] *Sons and kinsmen of King Izates* These were of Adiabene, a kingdom in the Upper Tigris region (Iraq of today), and had converted to Judaism (cf. 343[*d*] above). The king's family lived in Jerusalem (*Antiq.* XX, 17 ff). He had fourteen sons and several brothers, some of whom fought at the side of the rebels in Jerusalem and in the end became prisoners of Titus, here called Caesar. The palace of Helena, the house of Princess Grapte (cf. 355) and the house of the family of King Izates were situated in the Ophel, south of and close to the Temple Mount, where other aristocratic abodes had clustered. Unlike the lay and priestly aristocrats who lived in mansions built over the Western Hill (Upper City), they chose to be close to the Temple. No vestige of the palaces have been found in the Ophel excavations thus far; but in the course of recent exploration (1978-1979) immediately south of the paved throroughfare that runs parallel to the southern wall of the Temple Mount, an old Israelite house was unearthed, and over its remains was found a mansion of a later date that may possibly be identified as one of the princely abodes referred to. Another ancient structure, namely the Synagogue (or Hospice) of the "freedmen," named after its founder Theodotus, stood nearby in the Ophel, according to a Greek inscription found there reading: "Theodotus, son of Vettenus, has built the synagogue...."

358[*b*] Namely, Herod's palace in West Jerusalem, described in *War* V., 176-183.

"A large structure on the southeastern edge of the Ophel, some 90 m. south of the Triple (Hulda) gate of the Temple enclosure. This building stood here in the period of the Judaean Monarchy and may be identified with the Beth-Millo *mentioned in 2 Kings 12, 22. It was reutilized in the Herodian period and used as a palace, apparently of the Adiabene royal family" (B. Mazar)*

358[c] This appears to be an exaggerated figure. The Zealot chiefs suspected that they wanted to desert to the Romans (cf. 366 below).
363[a] *The Lower City,* described in 354[d], [e]. The Pool of Siloam lay at its lower end.
366[b] *Oath,* or vow. The Zealots, contrary to the besieged and famished populace in the city, chose death rather than surrender. Josephus' entreaties fell on deaf ears.
370[a] *Underground passages* (mentioned also in 372). Extensive underground conduits were discovered in the Lower City, the Ophel, and other sections of the present Old City, as illustrated. They seem to have fed water to larger reservoirs, or they served as underground rain water sewers, which ran downhill. One of the best known is the well-built conduit situated under the Tyropoeon Road, some of whose sections have also been discovered in the Lower City or Ophel. They seem to have led rainwater to the Upper and Lower Siloam Pools and the Kidron valley plantations of Siloam. Such sewers were 2-3 m. in width and could shelter many fugitives. Other underground conduits, pits, or reservoirs periodically come to light following an earth collapse. One was excavated recently, revealing gruesome skeletons probably dating from AD 70. *Mishna Para* refers also to underground trenches situated in hollow sections under houses and yards in Jerusalem. Cf. 372.
373[b] *Tasted the very corpses* A similar hyperbole in *War* IV, 541 describes Simon-bar-Giora's frenzy.

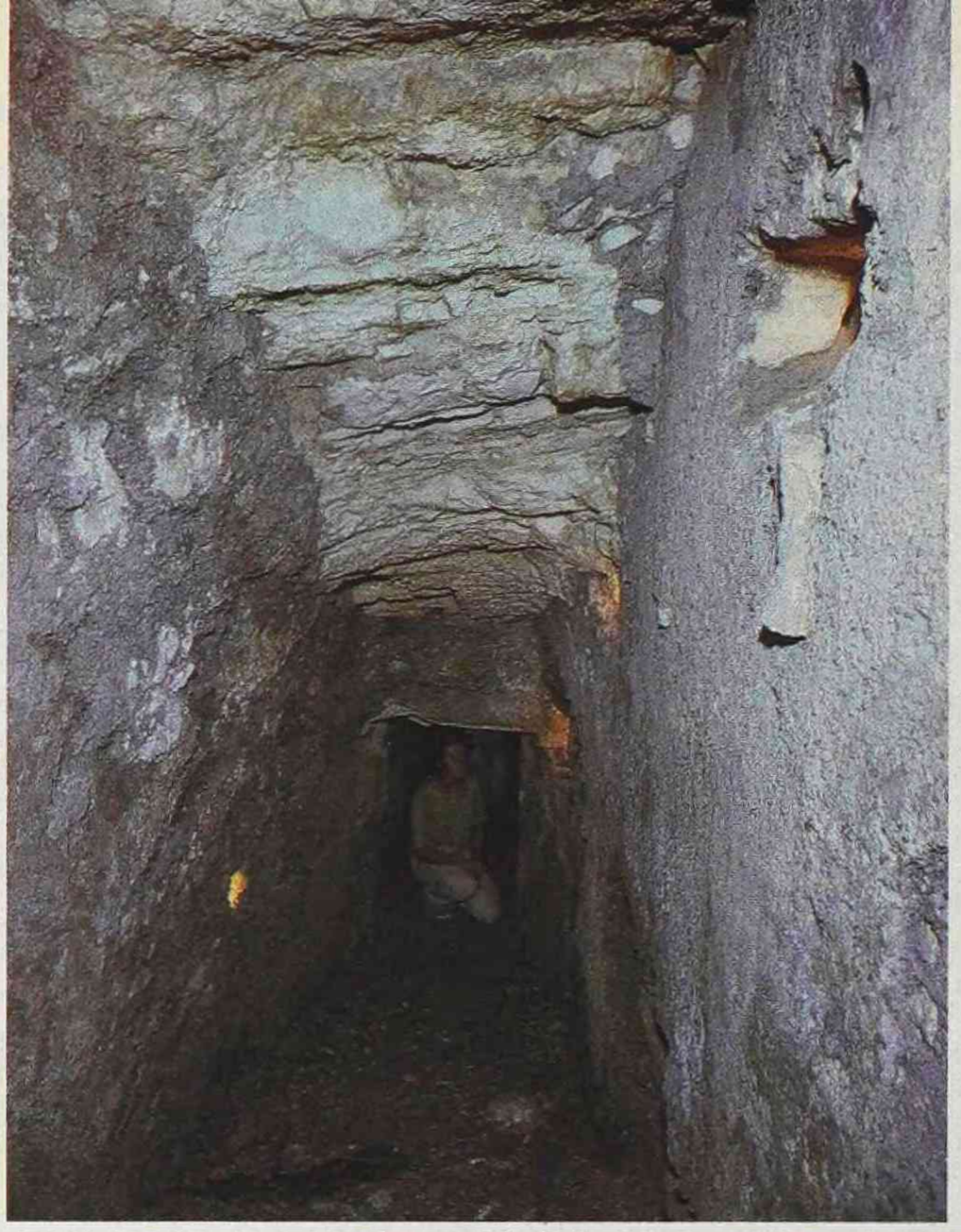
crowded there, some eight thousand four hundred in number [c], and looted the money. (359) They also took two Romans alive as prisoners, one a cavalryman, the other an infantryman. They slew the latter on the spot and dragged him around the city, as if, in this one person, revenging themselves on all Romans. (360) The cavalryman, who claimed that he had a useful idea that might save them, was brought before Simon; but when he had nothing to tell, he was handed over to one of the officers, Ardalas, to be executed. (361) Ardalas, after tying his hands behind his back and bandaging his eyes, marched him forth in full view of the Romans to be beheaded, but the prisoner managed to escape to the Romans at the moment when the Jew drew his sword, (362) After such an escape from the enemy, Titus could not bring himself to put him to death, but judging that he was unfit to be a Roman soldier after letting himself be taken alive, he stripped him of his arms and dismissed him from the legion, a punishment worse than death to one with any self-respect.

2. The Lower City burned by the Romans

(363) Next day the Romans, after driving the rebels from the Lower City [a], burned the whole place as far as Siloam [a]. They were delighted that the city had been destroyed, but got very little loot since the rebels had cleared out everything before withdrawing to the Upper City. (364) The latter felt no remorse for their evil deeds, but were boasting of them as blessings. Indeed, when they saw the city burning, they said with smiling faces that they were cheerfully awaiting the end; as the people were slaughtered, the Temple in ashes, and the city blazing; they were leaving nothing to their enemy. (365) Yet to the very last Josephus never wearied in his entreaties to them to spare the rest of the city; although, for all his denouncing the rebel savagery and impiety, and for all the advice he

The village of Siloam stood on the ridge east of the Kidron valley and east of the city ramparts that enclosed the City of David. The tombs below are of pre-Israelite origin

The excavations along the Southern Wall with the Old City in the foreground



An underground passage that led from the Ophel to an underground section of the Temple Mount

A sundial found in the excavations

Mortal combat between Romans and their foes, carved on a sarcophagus of a Roman officer

One of the ancient rain sewers near the Temple Mount. It may have served as a refuge

gave them to ensure their salvation, he got nothing but ridicule in return. (366) Since they could not surrender because of their oath [*b*] and were unable now to fight the Romans on equal terms, caged as if in a prison house, while their hands, used to killing, itched for slaughter, they scattered through the city's outskirts and lay in wait among the ruins for anyone trying to desert. (367) Many, in fact, were caught, but as hunger had left them too weak even to run away, they were all butchered and their bodies thrown to the dogs. (368) But any kind of death was more bearable than starvation, so that, although they now had no hope of mercy from the Romans, they still fled to them, and though the rebels were murderous, they fell voluntarily into their hands also. (369) Not one spot in the city was left empty; every corner had its corpse, a victim of hunger or sedition.

3. Escape through the underground

(370) The last hope that bolstered the tyrants and their brigand comrades lay in the underground passages [*a*]. They did not expect them to be searched if they took refuge in them, and they intended, after the complete capture of the city and the departure of the Romans, to come out and make good their escape. (371) But this proved to be an idle dream, for they were not destined to escape from either God or the Romans. (372) At the time, however, they had such faith in their underground retreats that they caused more fires than the Romans. All those who fled from the flames into the underground passages they killed without hesitation and plundered; and if their victim had food, they snatched it away and devoured it, still dripping with the poor man's blood. (373) By now they were actually fighting each other over food, and I really believe that if capture had not forestalled them, they would have tasted the very corpses [*b*] in their excess of bestiality.

The underground area, below the esplanade of the Temple Mount, covers the ascending ramps that linked the outer gates to the esplanade, the halls, and other structures related to the Temple's ritual, organization, stores, and water storage. The latter is evidenced by the water-drawers (photographed in the early 1900s) filling their water skins from one of the numerous wells. This echoes an ancient popular Jewish ceremony conducted on the Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth) called the "drawing of water" as described in the Talmud

374[*a*] *The steep approach on all sides* and the precipitous topography of the Upper City: It rose in sharp inclines from the western side of the Tyropoeon Road (originally the Tyropoeon Vale which was in the Lower City and intersected Jerusalem) toward the Western Hill and the Upper City where the royal palace was situated; south of it on the hill was the aristocratic quarter inhabited by the wealthy Jews and the priests. The various sections of the Upper City were reached through narrow, winding stairways, as illustrated, and these, in their ascent, would reach the level of lower rooftops. They represented an almost insurmountable obstacle to the Roman legions. Furthermore, the outer ramparts of the Upper City formed part of the ancient First Wall (described in *War* V, 142-147), which rested also over the sharp inclines of the hill rising from the Hinnom valley (see map of siege). This topography must be borne in mind in interpreting the difficult text in the present chapter (paras. 374-377).

374[*b*] The 20th of Lous (September) or Ab, in the Jewish calender.

375[*c*] Twenty furlongs, about 20 km. to reach the timber growths.

376[*d*] *The royal palace* on the western hill, where the rebels were entrenched (cf. 358[*b*]). Since the prospects of voluntary surrender were very doubtful, the Romans were obliged to erect embankments, some of stone and timber and, probably, around certain steep sections and impassable areas within the Upper City, as described in note 374[*a*]. The final attack was delayed for eight days until the Romans were ready.

377[*e*] The siege embankments rose west of, and at a higher level than the Xystus and the bridge, or causeway referred to in 191[*b*] above.

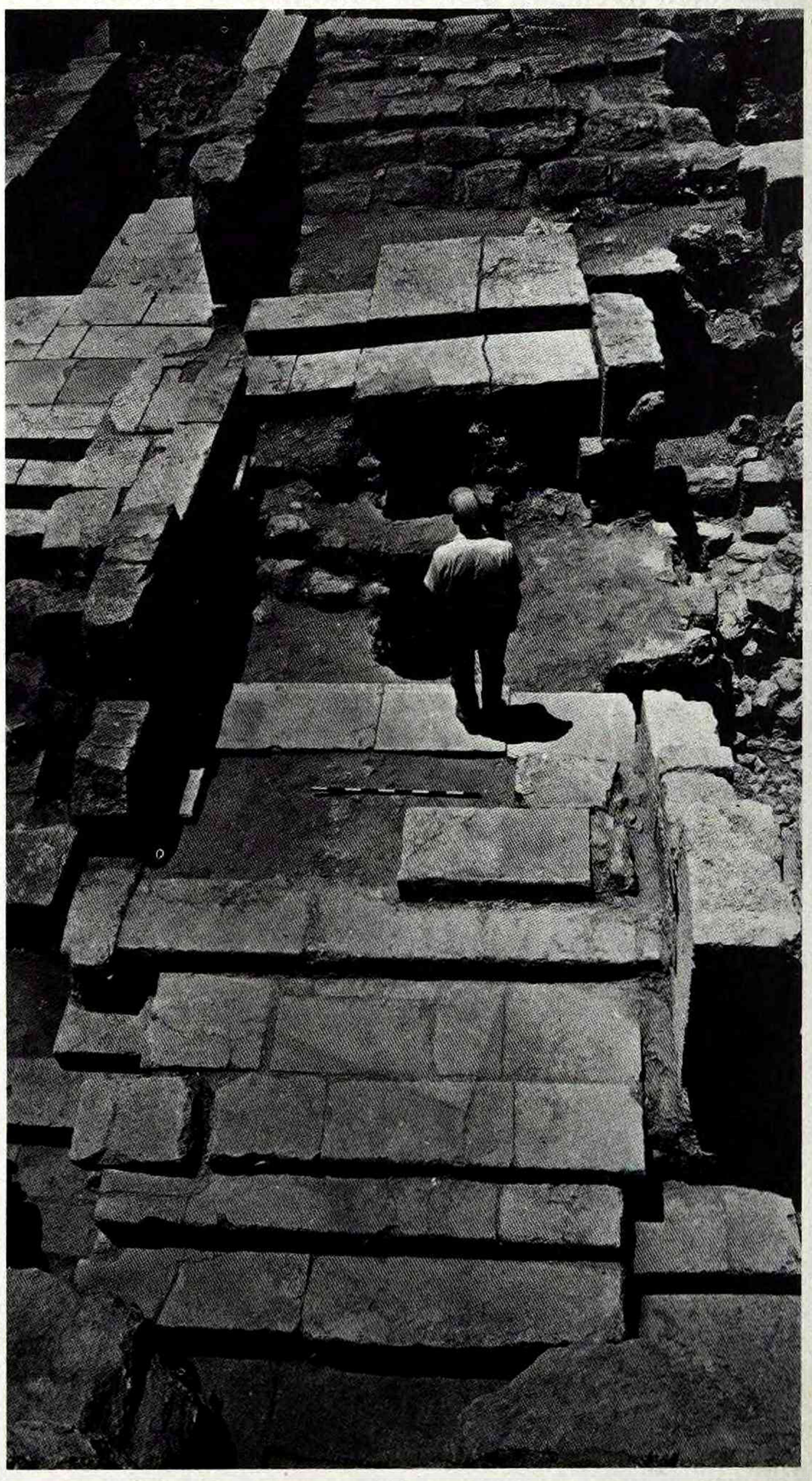
377[*f*] *The tower that Simon had built,* i.e., when he was at war with John of Gischala (cf. 191[*a*] above). The tower was built by John, not Simon. The names of John and Simon are transposed by mistake, and the topography west of the Xystus and Tyropoeon Road improperly understood (see map). Apparently some of the embankments were put up near those that Simon-bar-Giora had destroyed.

377[*g*] *Stronghold for himself* It must be noted that the city was not intersected above the Tyropoeon Road. Commentators in past years were led to believe that the embankments raised by the Romans within the city (cf. 374[*a*]) were erected against an extant inner wall below the upper levels of the Upper City. B. Mazar has disproved this theory: "The traditional argument is that there must have been a wall between the Lower and Upper cities; otherwise how could the Zealots have held out a month against the Roman legionaries who had already occupied the Lower City? It is evident, in fact, that the fierce defensive action against the Romans took place on the steep rocky terrain of the Western Hill (west of the Tyropoeon) and among the massive buildings erected on it. Hence there is no need to look for a forgotten wall to account for the defense in this urban area during the final Roman assault against the Upper City... Contrary to the general opinion that the city was divided in two sections by a wall, Josephus presents a clear picture of a single integrated city, in which the two principal parts, the Upper and Lower cities, were surrounded by a single wall. This so-called ancient 'Old Wall' was considered impregnable by the historian (*War* V, 142-147)... The reference is evidently to the First Wall which enclosed an area of some 4,800 square yards as follows: From the royal Herodian palace and its three towers in the west, down to the wall on the upper slope of the Kidron valley in the east; from the line starting at the Hippicus tower as far as the Xystus compound, and the western porticoes of the Temple to the north. Outside the area of the First Wall were the Temple Mount, the commercial and craftsmen's quarter of the Upper Market situated north of the First Wall, and enclosed by the Second Wall; and finally, the New Town, still further north and protected by the Third Wall erected in the days of King Agrippa I." (*Ibid.*, pp. 206-208; see map facing VI, 278-285).

Chapter VIII

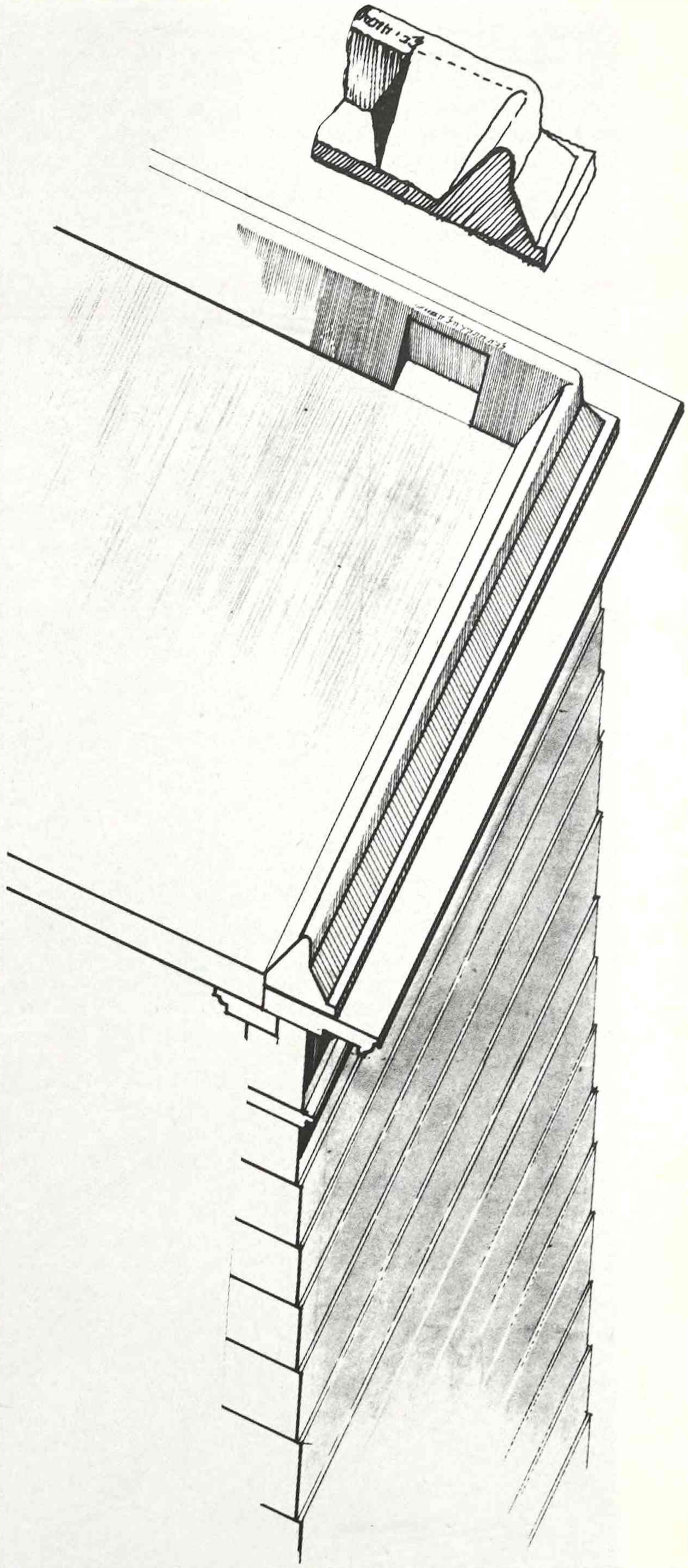
1. Capture of the Upper City

(374) Caesar, finding it impossible to capture the Upper City without siege earthworks because of the steep approach on all sides [*a*], apportioned the task among his forces on the twentieth of the month of Lous [*b*]. (375) It was difficult to transport the necessary timber, because the entire neighborhood of the city had been stripped bare for a distance of a 100 furlongs [*c*] to erect the earlier earthworks, as said. (376) The four legions raised their works on the west side of the city opposite the royal palace [*d*]; while the auxiliaries (377) and the other units raised up earthworks adjoining the Xystus [*e*], the bridge, and the tower that Simon had built [*f*] as a stronghold for himself [*g*] during the struggle with John.

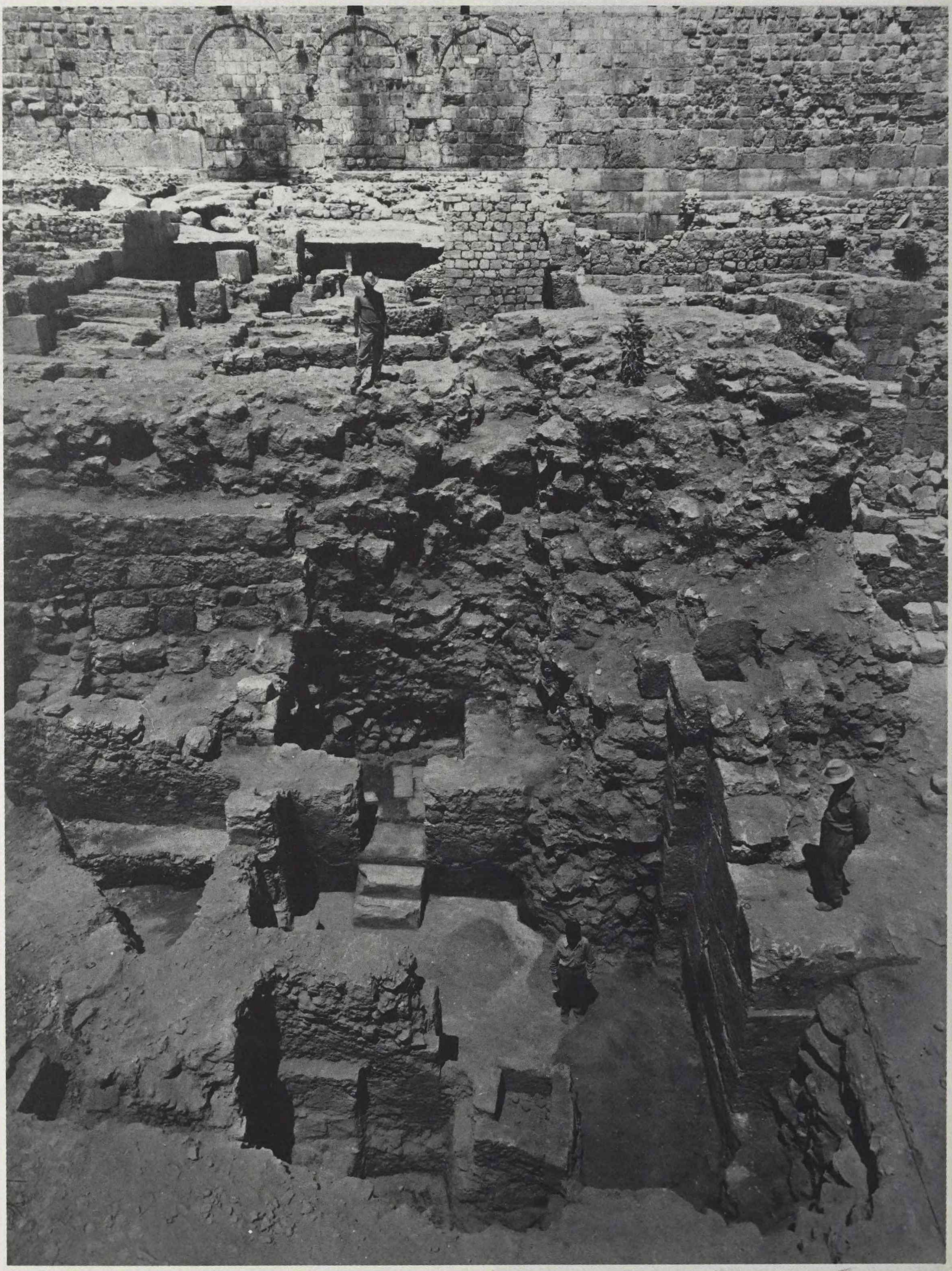


The ascending paved street along the southern wall of the Temple Mount, leading to the Hulda gates. The excavations conducted by B. Mazar after 1968 proceeded from the foot of the Western and Southern walls of the Temple Mount and descended to the Ophel, north of the City of David

Huge Herodian masonry stones and architectural fragments that fell from the southwestern wall. The course of the thorough destruction of Jerusalem by Titus is slowly emerging as a result of excavations conducted by B. Mazar around the Temple Mount and in the Ophel, then later in the Lower City of David. The underground of the Temple proper is totally buried under the Islamic shrine (as illustrated in Book V)



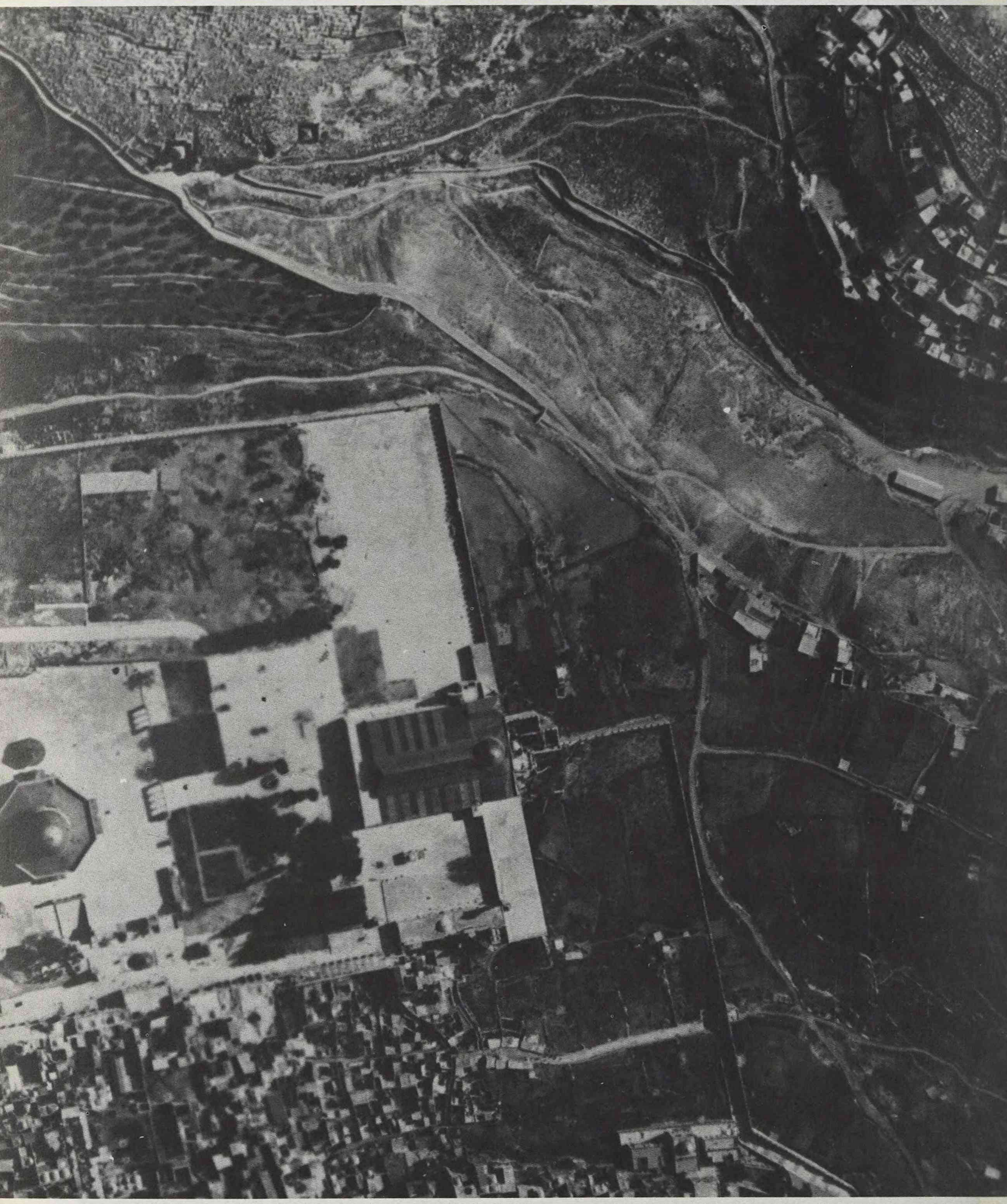
Reconstruction of the large (fallen) stones that stood at the top of the southwestern corner of the walls



"The area of the Triple (Hulda) gate, and a Byzantine building in the foreground" (B. Mazar)

The area south of the Hulda gates, namely the Ophel, partly covered by late Roman and Byzantine buildings

This scene approximates the one shown opposite para. 357[a] (commented on by B. Mazar). Professor N. Avigad comments: "The group of buildings, south of the Hulda gate, dating to the days of the Judaean kingdom, relate apparently to the Beth-Millo (mentioned in II Kings, 22) which was destroyed and burned in 586 BC. The area was used in the Herodian period as the foundation of a two-storied palatial building which may presumably be identified with one of the palaces of the kings of Adiabene mentioned by Josephus"



Aerial photograph (taken in the 1940s) of the southern ridge of ancient Jerusalem (the area outside the walls of the Temple Mount, right). The debris of the ancient city (the City of David) before AD 70 lie buried under the fields and scattered habitations and awaited archaeological research of the whole area. In the right-hand corner is the village of Siloam, divided from the City by the Kidron vale

2. The Idumaean overtures frustrated by Simon

(378) At this time the chiefs of the Idumaeans [*a*] met in secret to discuss the question of surrender, and sent five men to Titus to beseech his protection. (379) He, hoping that the tyrants also would give in because of the defection of the Idumaeans who had been an important factor in the war, hesitated at first, then consented to spare them and sent the men back. (380) But as they prepared to withdraw, Simon detected the plot and immediately put to death the five emissaries who had gone to Titus and seized and imprisoned the chiefs, of whom the most important was Jacob son of Sosas [*b*], (381) and, manning the walls with more vigilant guards, he kept careful watch on the Idumaean rank and file who were rendered helpless through the loss of their leaders.

Wholesale desertion to the Romans

(382) The sentries, however, were unable to cope with the deserters, for although great numbers were killed, far more escaped. (383) The Romans accepted them all, Titus through kindness disregarding his former announcement [*c*], and his men, being satiated with blood and in hope of gain, abstaining from slaughter. (384) Only the citizens were allowed to remain [*d*]; all the rest were sold, along with the women and children, for a trifling price per head [*e*], as supply was far in excess of demand, (385) Moreover, in spite of his earlier proclamation that no one should desert alone, but should bring his family with him, Titus nevertheless received such persons, appointing officers, however, to separate those among them who might deserve punishment. (386) The number sold was enormous, while over forty thousand citizens were spared [*a*], whom Caesar allowed to go wherever they wanted [*b*].

3. Temple treasures delivered by a priest

(387) During the same days, one of the priests, named Jesus son of Thebuthi, obtained from Caesar a pledged guarantee of safety on condition that he should hand over some of the sacred treasures. (388) He came out and handed over from the wall of the sanctuary two lampstands resembling those deposited in the sanctuary, as well as tables, bowls and platters, all of solid gold and very heavy [*c*]. (389) He also handed over the curtains [*d*], the vestments of the high priests, set with precious stones [*e*], and a multitude of other objects required for the Temple services. (390) In addition, the Temple treasurer [*a*], Phineas by name, when taken prisoner, disclosed the tunics and girdles of the priests [*b*], a large supply of purple and scarlet kept in store for repairing the curtain of the Temple, together with a large supply of cinnamon and cassia and a multitude of other spices, which were blended and burned daily as incense to God. (391) He delivered many other treasures, with an abundance of sacred ornaments and, though a prisoner of war, he thus earned the pardon granted to refugees.

378[*a*] *The Idumaeans* who remained in the besieged city when the main body withdrew in protest (*War* IV, 566).

380[*b*] *Sosas,* one of the commanders of the original expedition mentioned in IV, 255, 521 ff; V, 249; VI, 92, 148.

383[*c*] *Announcement* Titus extended his clemency to the besieged Idumaeans despite the stringent ban defined in 351[*b*]-353[*c*].

384[*d*] *Citizen... remain* A small minority in Jerusalem were *personae liberae* and could not be sold in slavery.

384[*e*] *Trifling price per head* Half a century later (after the Bar-Kokhba rebellion), Jewish slaves were sold per head at a price below that of cattle.

386[*a*] *Forty thousand citizens were spared* This appears to be a grossly exaggerated figure, even if it included large family groups or clans. This indicates, however, that the rebel chiefs had completely lost their iron grip over the non-combatants in the city. The author apparently did not include this figure in the totals enumerated after the end of the War (VI, 419-420).

386[*b*] *Wherever they wanted* The reference is to the rights and normal civic status of the Jews in the Roman Empire, which resembled that of ordinary provincials. However, the Jews who had taken part in the war and escaped death or enslavement were regarded as *dediticii* or "surrendered subjects." They must soon have merged with the remnants of the Jewish people so that, generally speaking, apart from the multitude of slaves, the civil status of the Jews was not altered. Many of the people in the cities that had been conquered and partially destroyed were sold into slavery; but many Jewish fugitives were left behind to spread the seeds of future revolts (CAH X p. 864; Cf. *War* VI, 420 below).

388[*c*] *Lampstands... bowls* The shapes of these lampstands and vessels are familiar from detailed descriptions in Talmudic sources, as well as from the relief on the Arch of Titus in Rome where the menorah, the table of shew-bread with incense cups, and trumpets are depicted as borne in Titus' triumphal procession (*War* VII, 148 ff.). No traces of the objects shown in the Titus Arch have been found, though apparently they were carried to Africa by the Vandals who invaded Rome, but recaptured by the Byzantines and taken to Constantinople (cf. VII, 148 ff).

389[*d*] *Curtains* It is doubtful whether the sacred and untouchable veil, which separated the holy place from the Holy of Holies, could have been spared from the conflagration and handed over to the Romans, as were items of incense taken by the priest Jesus, son of Thebuti. It was probably a spare veil that he saved from the fire, as two veils were made every year (*Mishna Shekalīm* 8, 5).

389[*e*] *Precious stones* attached to the priests' ornate vestments (V, 233 ff).

390[*a*] *Treasurer* Three treasurers (gizbārīm) were the administrators of the Temple and acted for the high priests inside and outside the grounds, according to the *Mishna* tractate *Shekalīm* and *Middot*. The items of incense referred to were kept in special chambers situated around the Women's Court. The fifth chapter of *Shekalīm* lists the officials of the Temple; Johanan ben-Phineas was in charge of the seal and the vestments.

390[*b*] *Tunics and girdles of the priests* Regarding the symbolism of the Temple and its appurtenances, even the high priests' vestments, along with the Temple and its vessels were depicted in Jewish tradition as representing the entire universe and the heavenly hosts (cf. *War* V, 117-118; *Antiq.*III, 179-187; Talm. Bab. *Sukkah* 55), while the Temple constituted a blessing for all nations of the world. It was firmly believed that the Temple, like heaven and earth, was destined to exist eternally. Its long existence during so many centuries and its established procedures intensified this feeling. Viewed within this context, it is possible to understand the agony, despair and spiritual vacuum that was created within the whole nation when the Temple was burned down and its treasures carried away. This feeling and its root symbolism, which is shared by Josephus, had been most poignantly expressed in former centuries in the Temple vision and mystiques of the prophet Isaiah and his school of prophets, as well as Ezekiel. It has dug deep roots into the Jewish psyche ever after. With the destruction of the Temple, in Jewish tradition, the image of the universe was rendered defective, the established framework of the nation was undermined, and an impenetrable wall of steel formed a barrier between Israel and its heavenly

Father, as expressed in Talmud *Sukkah* 556; *Berakhot* 32[*b*].

392[*a*] *Seventh Gorpiaeus* or 7th Elūl. The work began on the twentieth of Elul (September-October 70).

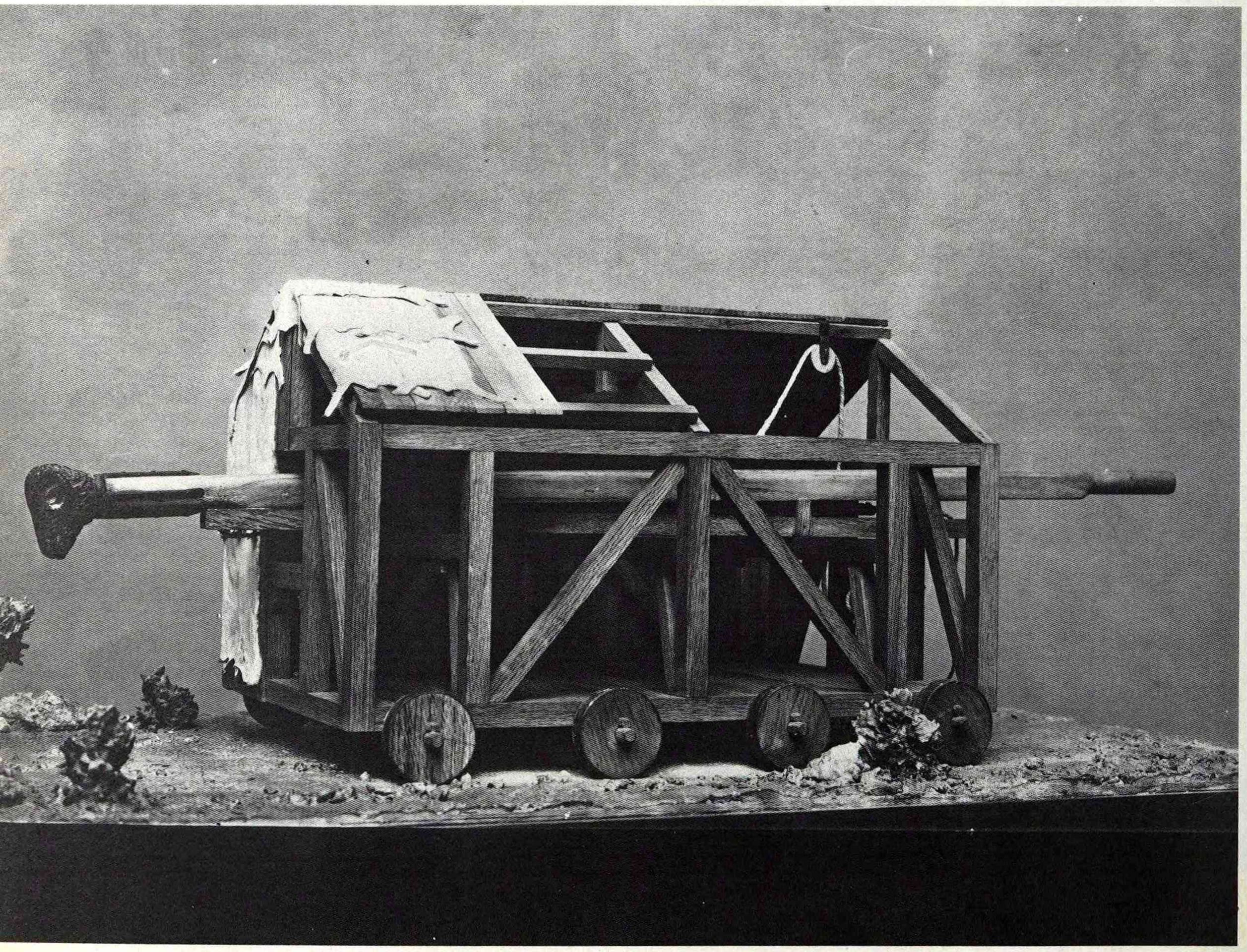
392[*b*] They withdrew from the First Wall to the inner hill of the Lower City, a section known as the Acra (cf. note 354[*c*]).

392[*c*] *Underground passages* Cf. 370[*a*]. The excavations conducted by Y. Shiloh in the lower Ophel have brought to light several sections of such passages.

4. The Upper City attacked

(392) The siege earthworks were now ready for use after eighteen days, and on the seventh of the month of Gorpiaeus [*a*] the Romans put the engines in motion. Some of the rebels, already despairing of the city, withdrew from the ramparts to the Akra [*b*], while others slunk down into underground passages [*c*]. (393) Many, however, ranged themselves along the wall and tried to repulse the Romans who were bringing up siege engines. There, too, the Romans overwhelmed them by sheer numbers and force, and above all by confidence, facing despondent and despairing men. (394) When a section of the wall was broken through, and some of the towers gave way before the battering rams, the defenders immediately took flight and even the tyrants were filled with a terror unjustified by the situation. (395) Before the enemy got through the breach, the Jews were paralyzed and ready to flee; and those men, once arrogant and bragging of their impious deeds, could now be seen abject and trembling—a change pitiful to note even in such

Covered battering rams were apparently used in overcoming the obstacles along the steep ascending upper levels that led to the Upper City



villains. (396) Their one desire was to make a dash for the wall [*d*] which shut them in, repel the guards, and hack their way through to safety. (397) But their old faithful supporters were nowhere to be seen, for they had scattered wherever they could, and men came running with news that the whole Western Wall [*a*] was overthrown, while others reported that the Romans had broken in and were nearby, looking for them. (398) Some, blinded by terror, declared that they could actually see the enemy from the towers, and fell on their faces, bewailing their own folly, and, as if hamstrung, were incapable of flight. (399) This indeed is signal evidence both of the power of God over the wicked and the fortune of the Romans. For the tyrants divested themselves of their security and of their own accord came down from the towers [*b*] from which they never could have been subdued by force, only by starvation. (400) Consequently the Romans, who had toiled so hard to break through the weaker walls, now captured by the gift of fortune those that were impregnable to their engines; for these three towers, described elsewhere [*c*], would have defied every machine of war.

5. Refuge sought by the rebels in Siloam and the underground

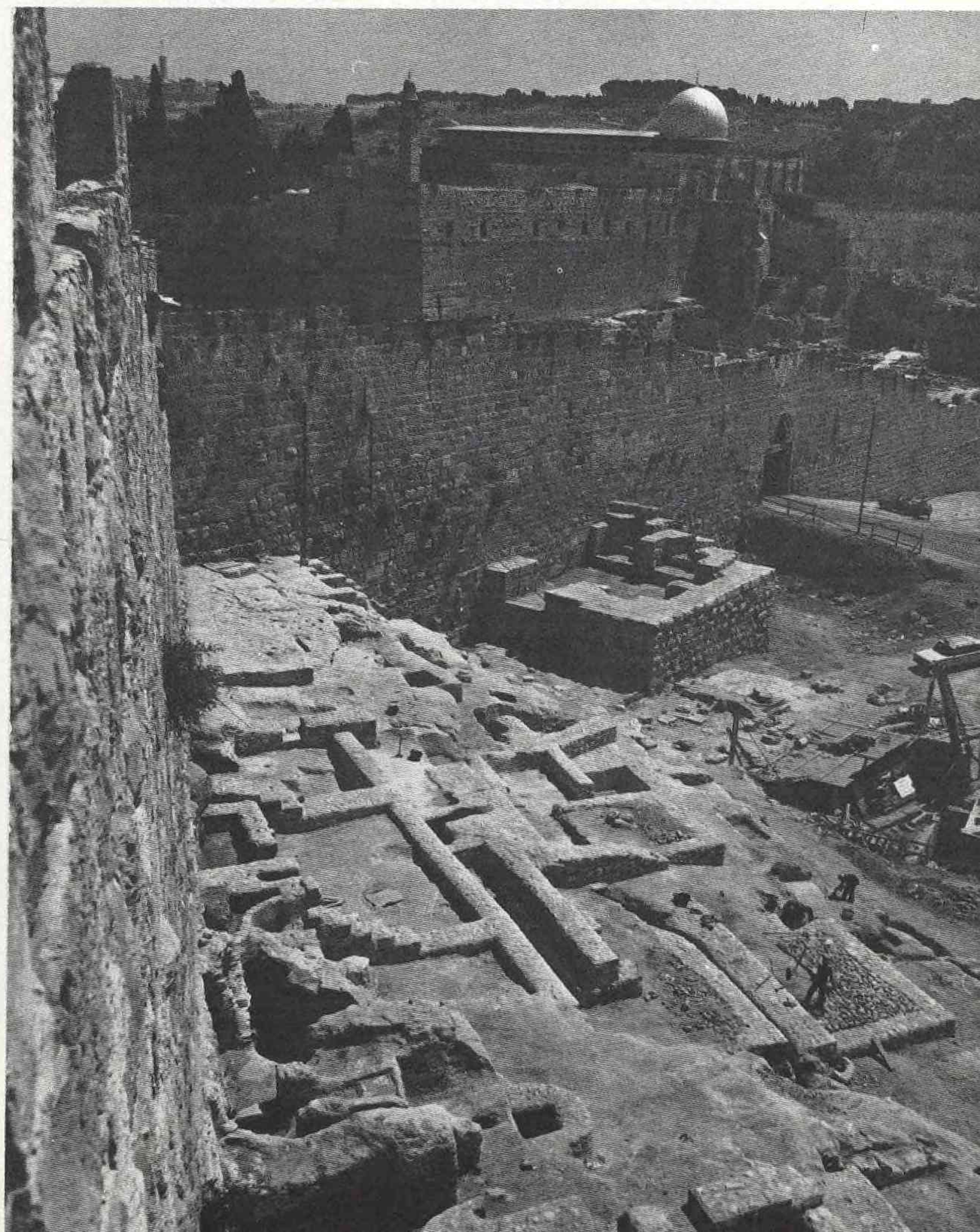
(401) Abandoning the towers, or rather driven down from them by God, they took refuge for the moment in the ravine below Siloam. Later, when they recovered somewhat from their panic, they made a dash to the adjoining section of the barrier [*d*]. (402) But their courage proved unequal to the crisis (their strength was now broken by terror and disaster) and they were repulsed by the guards, dispersed this way and that, and they plunged into the underground passages.

Total Roman victory

(403) Now masters of the walls, the Romans set up their standards [*a*] atop the towers and, with clapping of hands and singing, gave their paean of victory. They had found the conclusion of the war much easier than the beginning; they could hardly believe that they surmounted the last wall without bloodshed and were amazed at seeing none to oppose them. (404) They poured into the alleys, sword in hand, massacring indiscriminately all whom they met, and burned the houses with all who had taken refuge inside. (405) In the course of their raids, as they entered houses for loot, they found whole families dead and rooms full of victims of starvation; horrified by such sights, they retired empty-handed. (406) Yet pity for those who had thus perished was matched by no such feeling for the living, but, running through everyone they met, they choked the alleys with corpses and deluged the entire city with gore, so that many fires were quenched by the blood of the slain. (407) They ceased their slaughter at dusk, but fire gained the mastery in the night, and the dawn of the eighth day of the month of

396[*d*] *Wall* The circumvallating dike that surrounded the walled city.
397[*a*] The battering engines had breached the Western Wall of the city, which stood back and west of the royal palace (see illustrations). The Roman soldiers forced their way in without difficulty.
399[*b*] The three towers were Hippicus, Phasael, and Mariamme which formed a triangular strategic complex (V, 161 ff). The rebel leaders, in their desperate condition, were no longer able to offer serious resistance.
400[*c*] *Elsewhere* See note on 418, Book I.
401[*d*] *Barrier* A circumvallating dike that ran down below the upper and lower Siloam pools (see map).
403[*a*] *Military standards* Cf. VI, 316.

The Upper City was built on the hill overlooking the Temple Mount. The walls seen on the left (below) are not of Herodian origin but were built by the Arabs and Turks when Jerusalem had shrunk to a much smaller area than in the days of the War. The steps shown above led to a still higher level of the Upper City



407[*b*] *Eighth... Gorpiaeus,* or 8th Elul (October). After a siege of five months, during which the Romans laboriously, step by step, gained one position after another, the whole city was at last in the hands of the victors.

409[*a*] *Towers* The Hippicus, Mariamme, and Phasael. "The Phasael still stands and is most often identified with the lower portion of a square, solid structure under the erroneous name of 'David's Tower' northeast of the Citadel. The identification is based on the dimensions given by Josephus in his description of the base of the Phasael tower, which closely resemble the measurements of this structure. The height of the ancient base is 19.85 m., built in two parts, each of eight courses. The upper part is 12.12 m. wide and 21.40 m. long, and the lower part is slightly larger (18.30 × 22.60 m.). The upper part of David's Tower is a later addition. This solid structure is outstanding in the quality of its typical Herodian masonry" (N. Avigad, *Jerusalem Revealed,* p. 16). That this tower (one of the three that Titus did not destroy) still stands proves how well fortified the city was. It was practically indestructible, like the lower courses of the other Herodian walls, visible in the present Old City and the Temple Mount. When the emperor Hadrian razed Jerusalem anew in AD 135, he left the lower base of the Phasael tower standing.

413[*b*] See 409[*a*].

415[*c*] The Court of the Women situated on the eastern side of the upper platform of the Temple (over the Ḥēl) had not been destroyed by the fire and was turned into a concentration camp governed by the notorious Fronto. This is, apparently, where Josephus found three of his friends crucified, among dozens of others; whereupon he begged Titus to take them down. His doctors washed and treated them, thereby saving one of them; this was a rare case of survival after crucifixion (*Life,* 420-421).

416[*d*] *Fronto,* who was possibly the same as F. Haterius, the prefect of the Alexandrian troops, known for their hatred of Jews.

417[*a*] *Triumph* The triumphal procession celebrated in Rome (cf. *War* VII, 123-157).

418[*b*] *In chains... to Egypt* The lowest grade of slavery in the Roman world, wherein men became disposable possessions of their masters. On a former occasion Vespasian sent six thousand prisoners to work on Nero's Corinthian Canal (*War* III, 540).

418[*c*] *Theaters* The men were reserved to be victims of gladiatorial combat or to be thrown to beasts in arenas throughout the Roman Empire.

419[*d*] *Offered* The Jews abhorred the food prepared by the Romans; they regarded it as impure and defiled. They chose starvation rather than commit the sin of eating these rations on holy ground, and eleven thousand died as a result. Though this episode may be regarded as exaggerated, it is not out of character with Roman excesses, described in paras. 414-418 above.

On the opposite page:

(a) The massive defenses of Jerusalem: The lower levels of this tower of the city's First Wall are typical of Herodian construction.

(b) The massive supporting arch, built of heavy ashlars, was part of the Wilson Arch, which reached the western area of the Temple area esplanade.

(c) This filled-in arch (left side) described in Book V, formed part of the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, and represents probably the fourth (so-called) Warren gate, which faced the upper platform on which the Temple stood

Gorpiaeus [*b*] rose over Jerusalem in flames—(408) a city that during the siege had suffered such disasters that if it had enjoyed as many blessings from its foundation, it would have been the envy of all—a city that deserved such terrible misfortunes on no other account than that it produced a generation such as brought about her downfall.

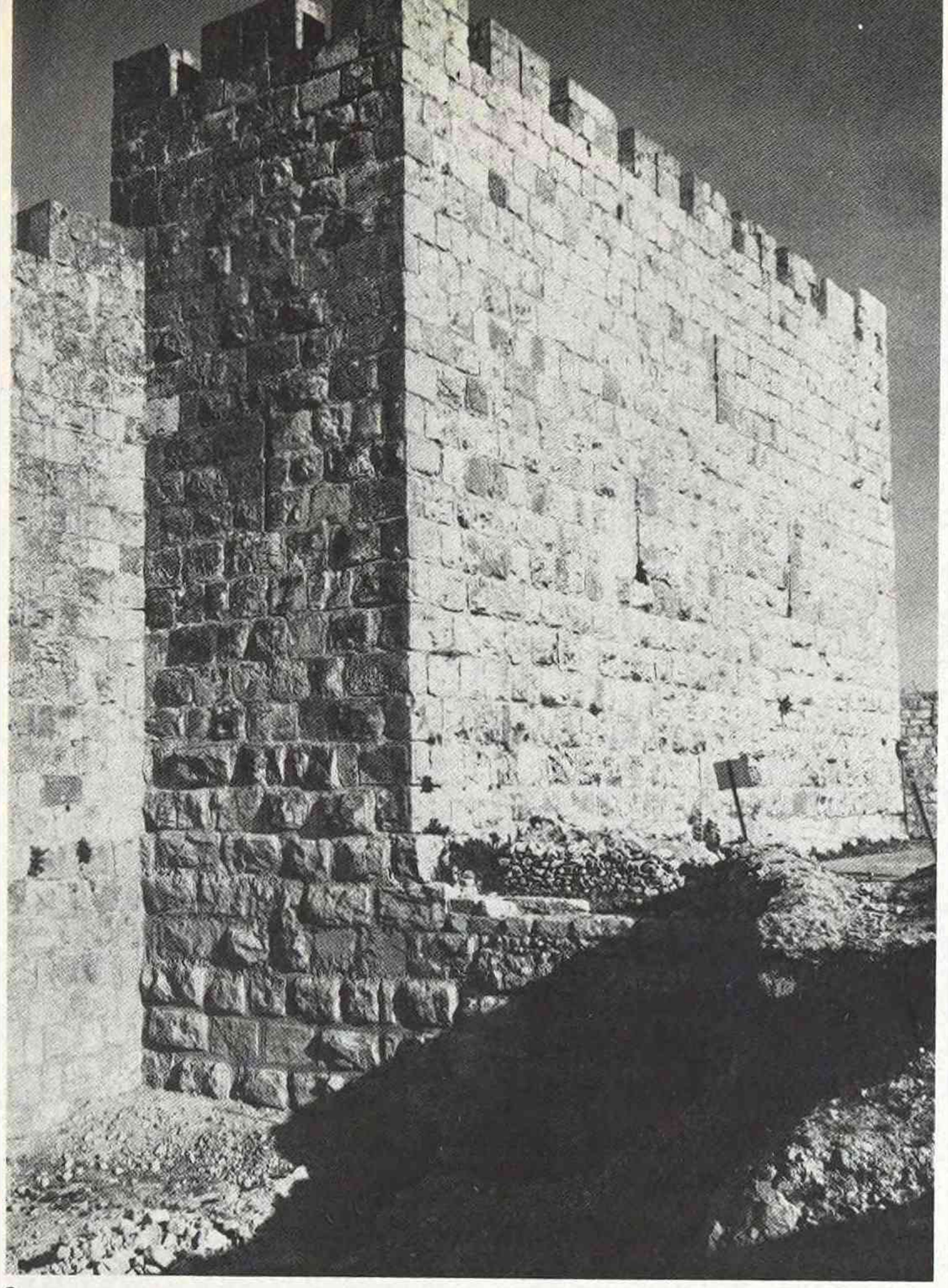
Chapter IX

1. Titus' entry into Jerusalem

(409) When Titus entered the city, he was amazed by its strength, and especially by the towers [*a*], which the tyrant chiefs, in their mad folly, had abandoned. (410) And when he observed their solid and lofty mass all the way up, the tremendous size of each block, and how accurately they fitted, also how great their breadth and how immense their height, he exclaimed, "God indeed has been our ally in this war; (411) it was God who brought down the Jews from their strongholds; for what could human hands or engines accomplish against such towers?" (412) At that time he made similar observations to his friends; and he also set free all persons imprisoned by the tyrant chiefs who were found in the forts. (413) Later, when he destroyed the rest of the city and pulled down the walls, he left the towers [*b*] as a memorial to his own fortune to whose cooperation he owed his victory over such impregnable defenses.

2. The dire fate of the captives

(414) Because the soldiers were now growing weary of bloodshed, and survivors appeared constantly, Caesar gave orders to kill only those who offered armed resistance and to take alive all the rest. (415) The troops, in addition to those covered by their orders, slaughtered the aged and infirm; people in their prime who might be useful they herded into the Temple area and shut up in the Court of the Women [*c*]. (416) Caesar appointed one of his freedmen as their guard, and his friend Fronto [*d*] to decide the fate appropriate to each. (417) All those who had taken part in sedition and brigandage (they informed against each other) he executed. He picked out the tallest and most handsome of the lot and reserved them for the triumph [*a*]. (418) Of the rest, those who were over seventeen he put in chains and sent to hard labor in Egypt [*b*], while great numbers were presented by Titus to the provinces to perish in the theaters [*c*] by sword or by wild beasts; those under seventeen were sold. (419) During the days in which Fronto was sorting them out, eleven thousand of the prisoners perished from starvation, some because they did not receive any food because of the hatred of their guards, others because they would not accept it when offered [*d*]. Moreover, to fill so many mouths there was not even enough wheat.



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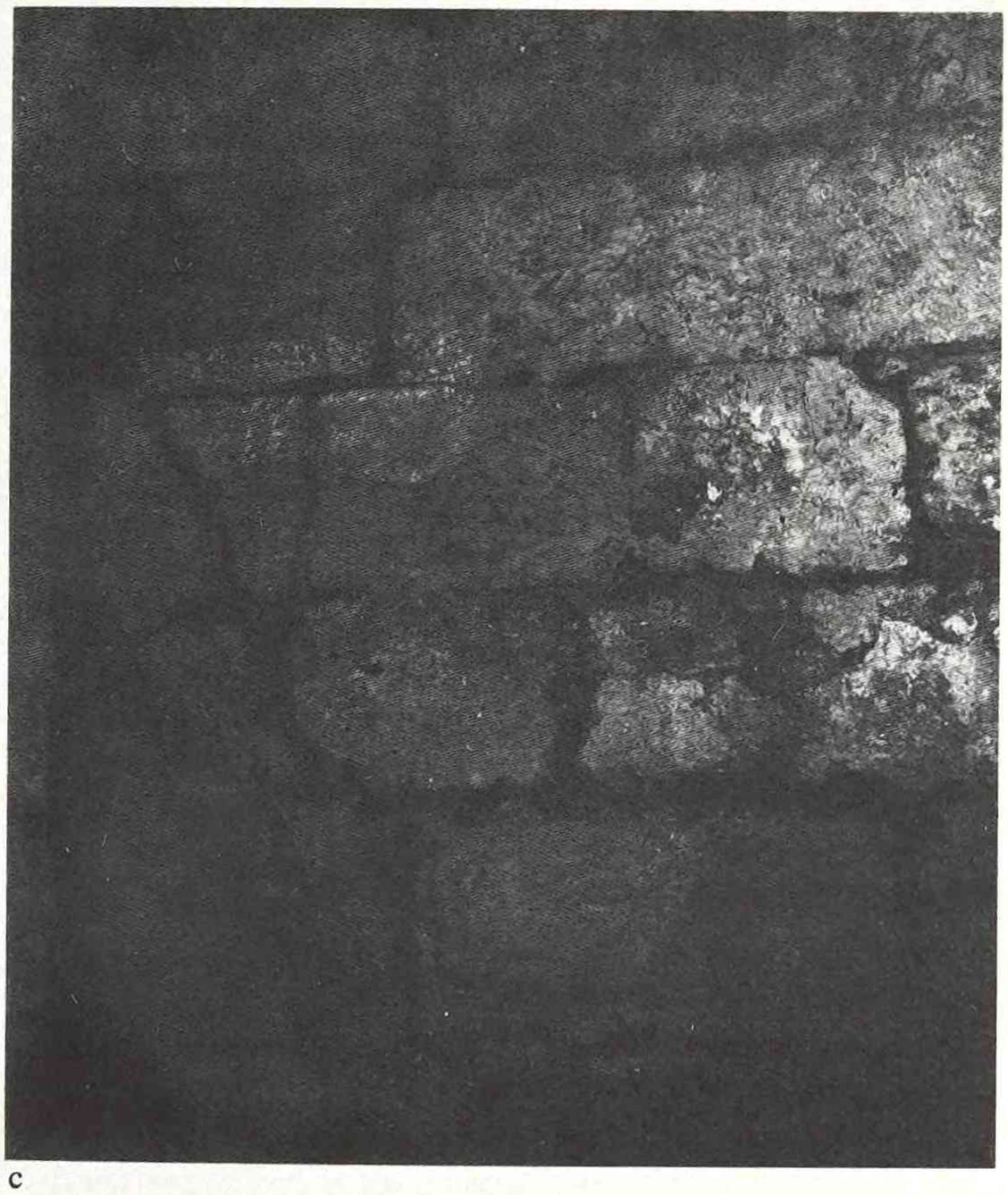

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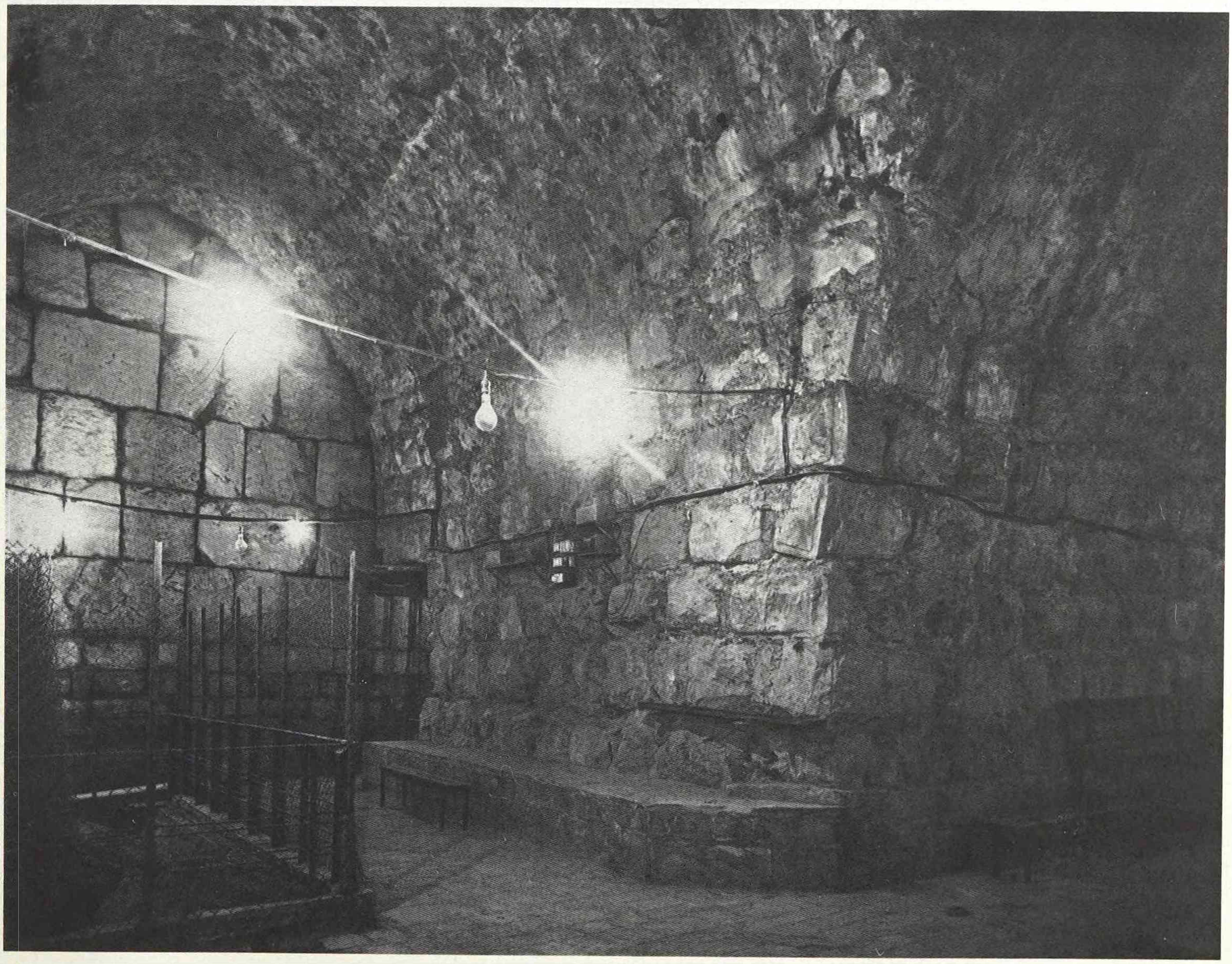
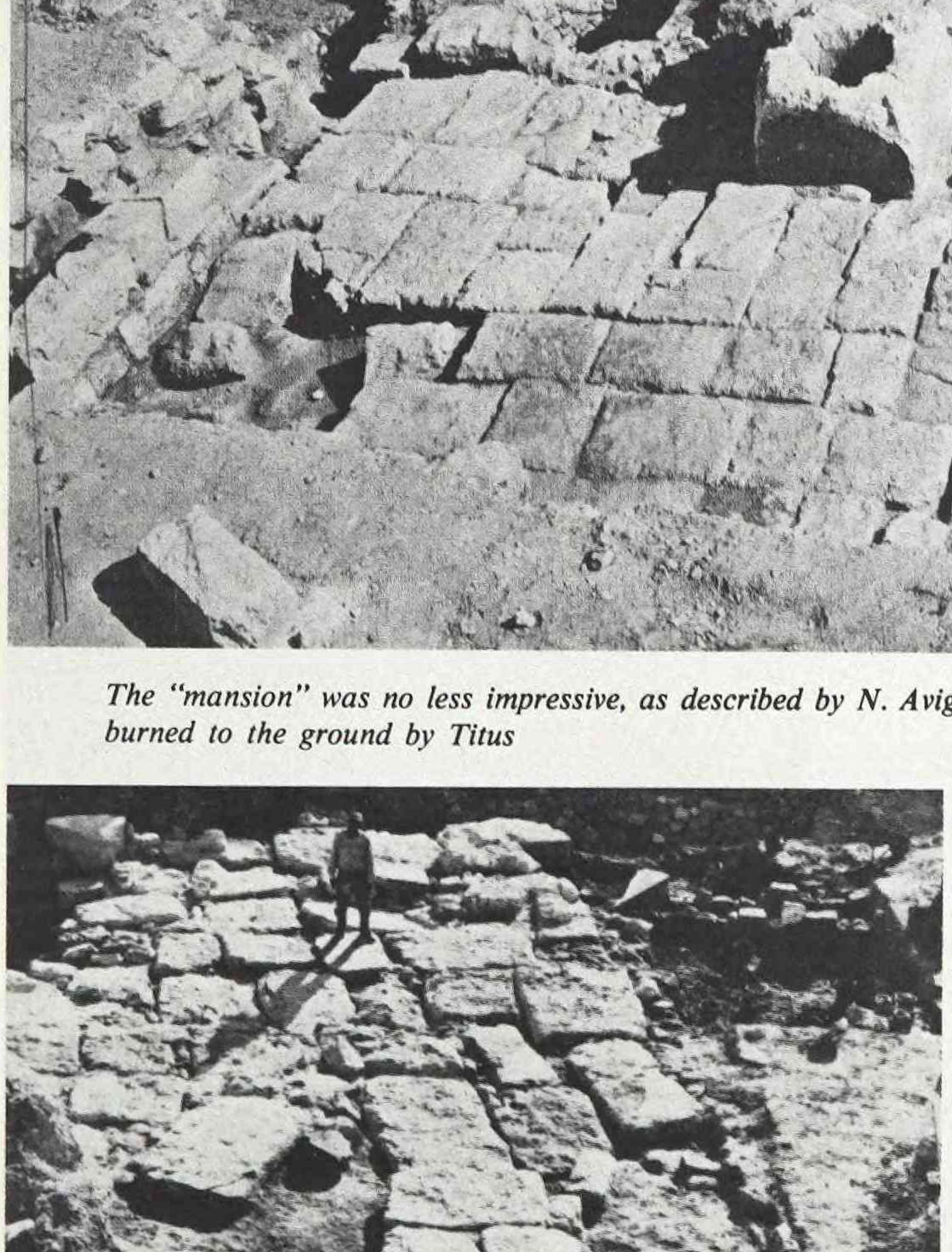


When new foundations were dug for the apartment houses erected recently in the Jewish quarter of the Old City, archaeologists uncovered several sections of the ancient Upper City that showed clear signs of the great fire that swept Jerusalem in AD 70. One of them is the widely publicized "burnt house" (above). It consisted of six rooms and a mikveh. *The skeleton of a person who died standing up was found on the premises*

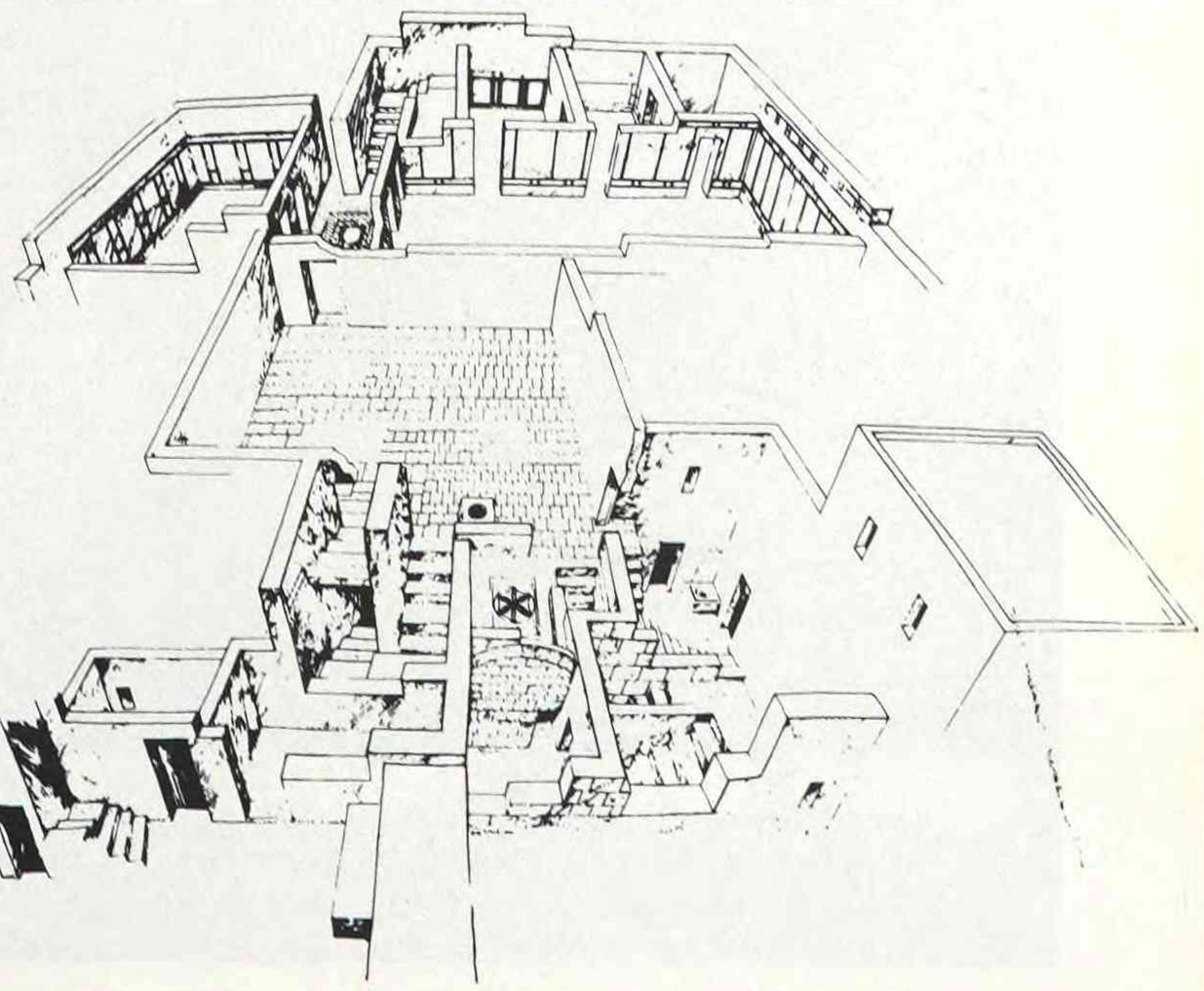
A cornucopia relief found in one of the excavated houses of the Upper City

The "mansion" was no less impressive, as described by N. Avigad, and was typical of the architecture of the richer homes that were burned to the ground by Titus

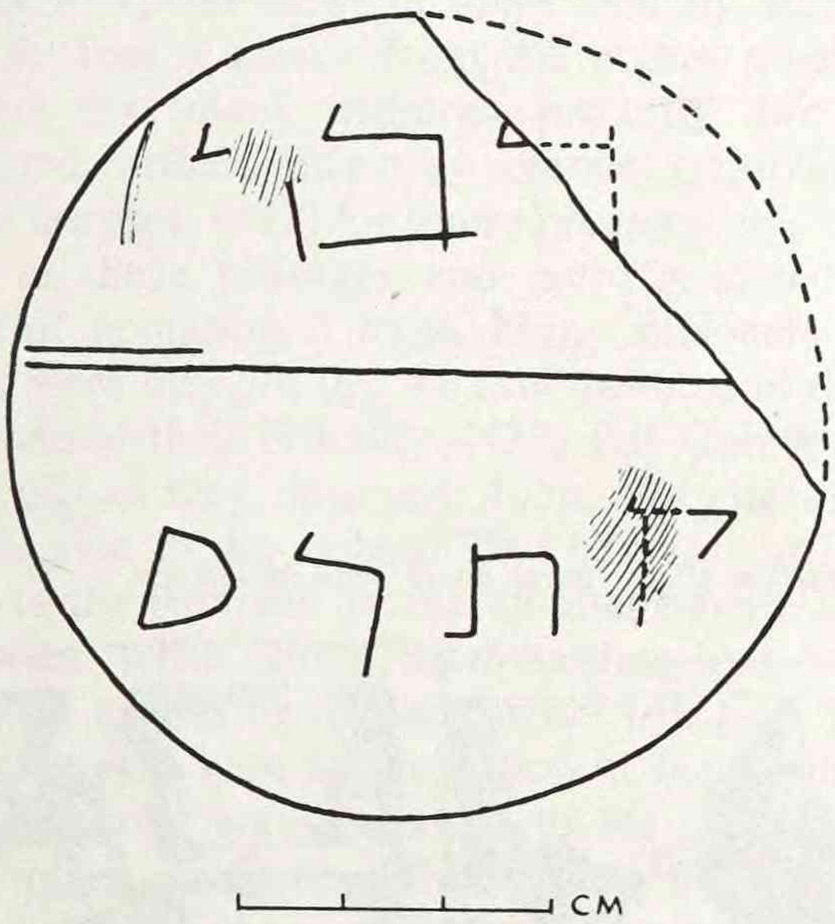


Stone-paved street in the Upper City

Reconstructed plan of the remains of the mansion (above) that overlooked the Temple Mount (N. Avigad)



Among the contents of the "burnt house" N. Avigad points out a stone table (above), stone and clay storage cups, jars, cooking pots (upper right), as well as an inscription "Devar Katros" (center), (linking the house with the priestly Katros hierarchy) and a fragmentary mould for casting coins (center right). Stone jars and cups were greatly in demand, as they conformed to the purity laws and were not subject to contamination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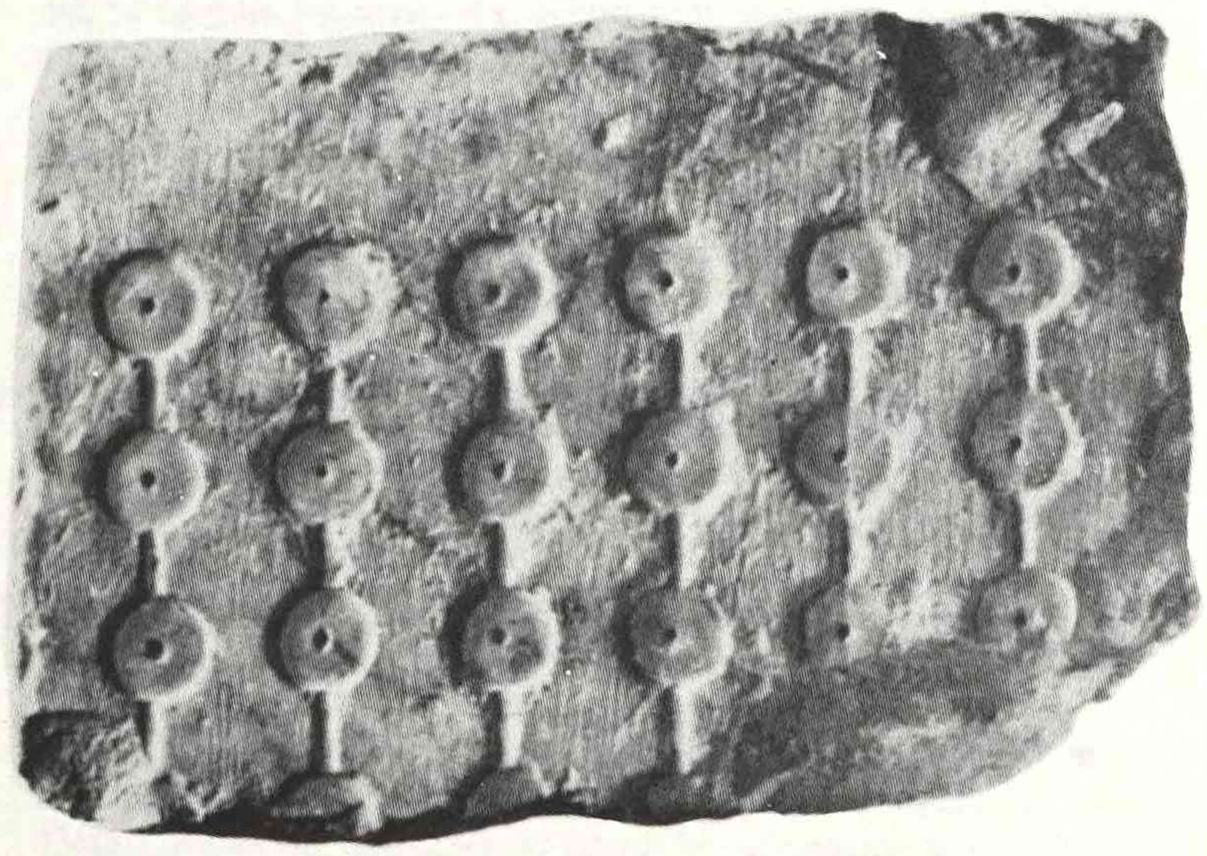
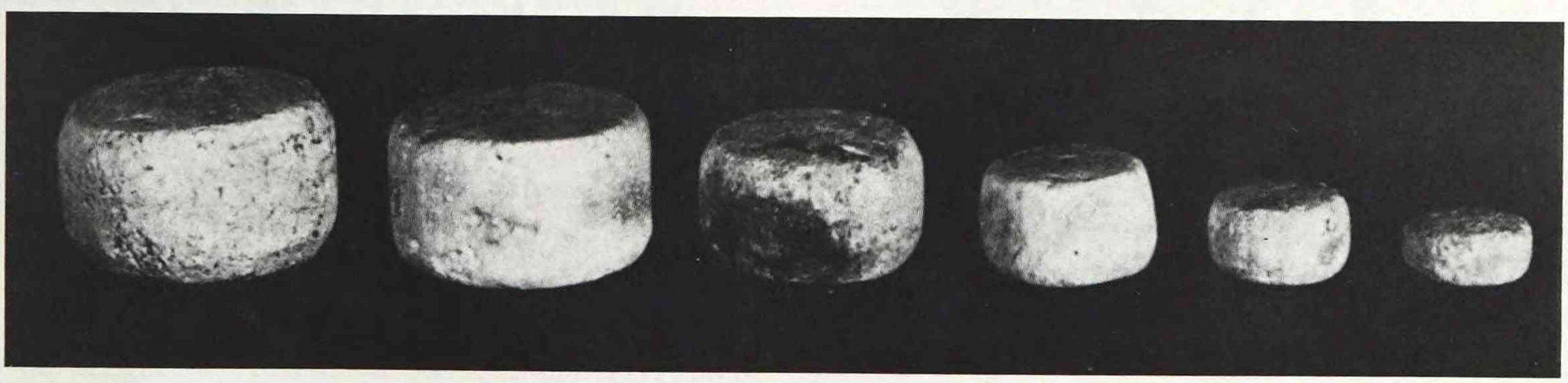




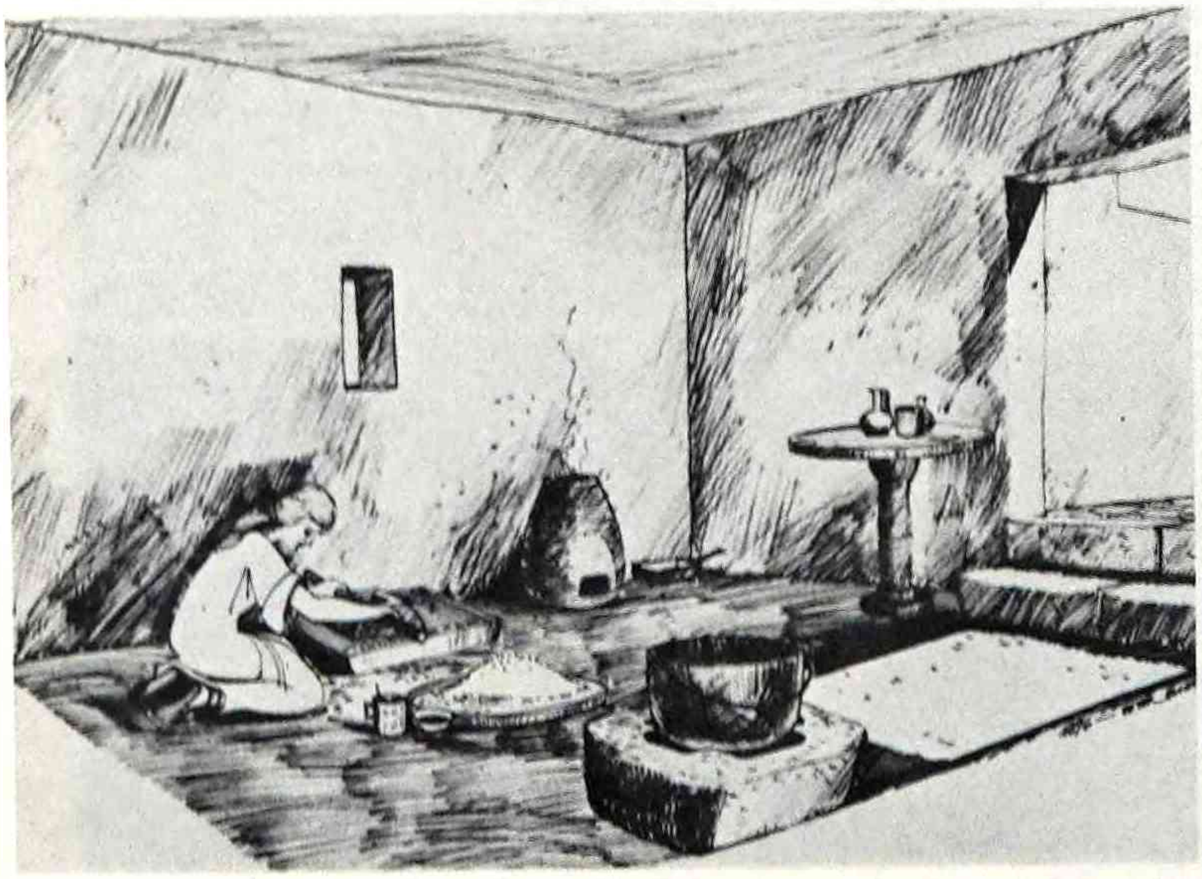
3. The numbers of prisoners and the dead

(420) All the prisoners taken captive throughout the entire war totalled 97,000; those who perished during the long siege, from its early stages to the end were 1,100,000 [*a*]. (421) Of those, the largest number consisted of Jews by race, but not natives of Jerusalem; they had assembled from the whole country for the Feast of Unleavened Bread [*b*]; and had suddenly been caught up in the war. Consequently, the overcrowding caused death first by pestilence and later, also more quickly by hunger. (422) That so many could be crowded into the city was illustrated by the census taken under Cestius [*a*]. He wished to prove to Nero, who despised the nation, the city's strength, and instructed the chief priests to hold a census, if possible. (423) Accordingly, on the occasion of the Feast of the Passover, at which they sacrifice between the ninth and the eleventh hour [*b*], and as

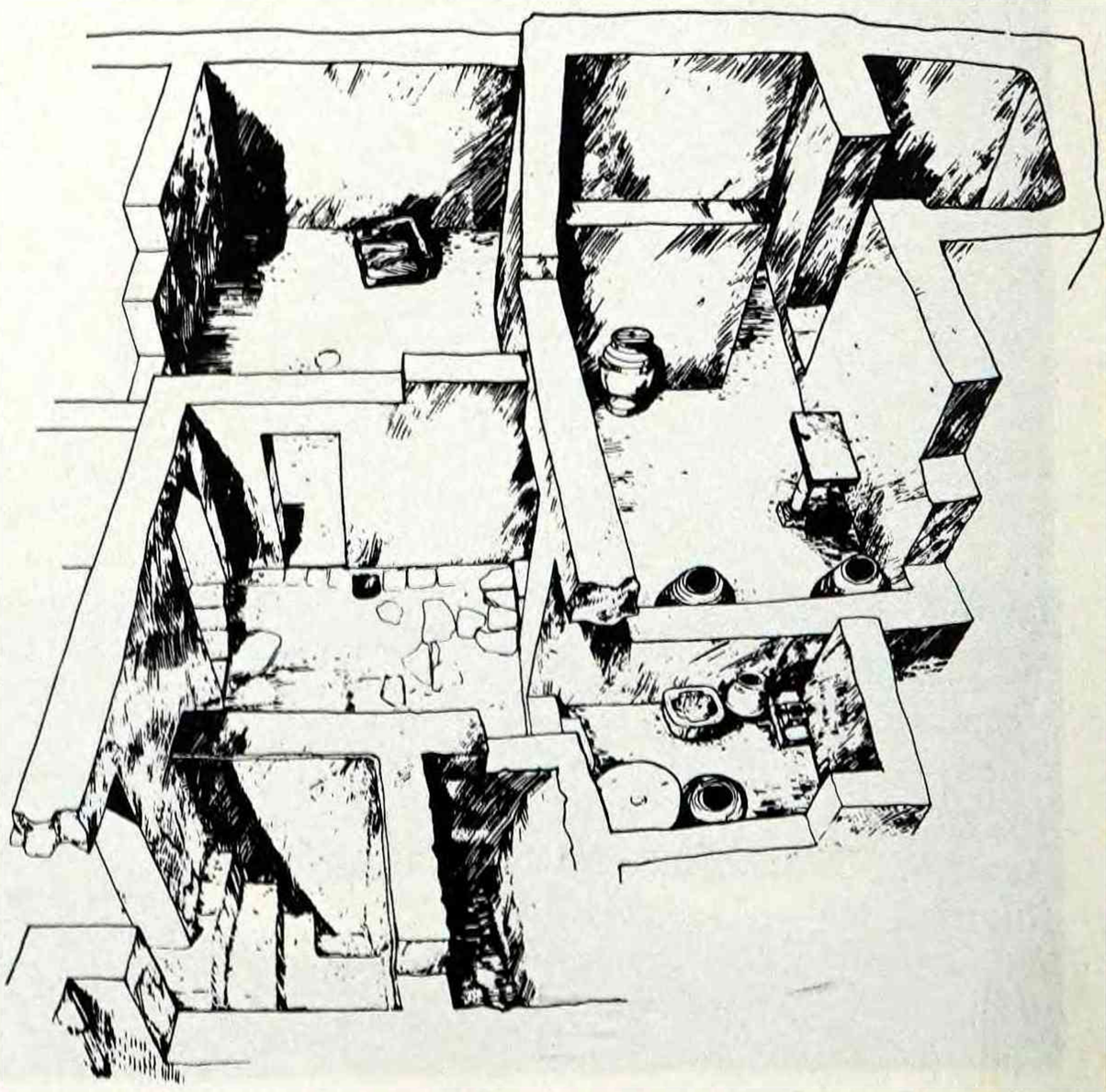
420[*a*] *Prisoners taken* The estimate of 97,000 prisoners taken "through the entire war," as stipulated, is possible. The report may have omitted those captured during the prolonged war in Galilee, east of Jordan, and in towns outside Jerusalem. The total of 1,000,000 dead is grossly exaggerated; but if Tacitus' figure of 600,000 besieged in Jerusalem is only partly true (*Histories*, V, 13), then between a quarter and a half million people perished in Jerusalem and the rest of the country.

421[*b*] *The Feast of Unleavened Bread* The evidence of Mishnaic literature, though illuminating, is not helpful enough. Josephus identifies the names of people gathered in Jerusalem with the pilgrims who were caught in the field of war. They were decimated by the tens of thousands by famine and its companions—disease and epidemic. The estimates of some modern scholars, based on the *Mishna* quotations in tractate *Pesächîm* (on the participants in the sacrificial rites), bring the numbers of celebrants to more than a hundred thousand. B. Mazar estimates that the normal population of Jerusalem in post-Herodian days, including the suburbs and outlying villages, at some 120,000. This is far fewer than the Tacitus and *Mishna* estimates of the regular population, plus the beleaguered pilgrims and refugees who may have crowded the capital to an uncommon degree.

422[*a*] *Census... under Cestius* Josephus justifies his estimate by relating that between the years 63 and 66, the procurator Cestius Gallus, seeking to demonstrate to Nero the size of the multitude, asked the priests to count the Passover sacrifices. They counted 255,600 (or a smaller number according to other variants). Josephus, too, informs us that no single Passover sacrifice was made by fewer than ten participants, adding that in many instances the groups included as many as twenty. Multiplying the sacrifices by ten, he arrives (para. 423) at the estimate of 2,700,000 for all ceremonially pure participants (para. 424). By his figures they should total 2,556,000, not counting these afflicted with disease or women in their period, who were not allowed to participate (para. 425). However, such estimates cannot be reconciled with the area of Jerusalem, its normal population as stated above, nor with ancient statistics deriving from descriptions of the procedures at Passover in the Temple, as found in the *Mishna* tractate quoted, or in Josephus, both of which lead to greatly exaggerated statistics. *What was the actual Jewish population between AD 66 and 135?* Historians have long debated this issue. In the present instance, if we assume, at best, that Josephus thought that every Jew in all Judaea and Transjordan scrupulously fulfilled his religious obligation to go to Jerusalem every Passover, we can take this number as his (Josephus') hypothetical



Reconstruction of the "burnt house" and its kitchen



groups of not fewer than ten persons form around each sacrifice, for it is forbidden to feast alone—while many groups included as many as twenty—(424) the count of the sacrifices showed that there were 255,600. (425) Allowing an average of ten diners to each sacrifice, this totals 2,700,000 [*c*] all ceremonially pure. (426) For those afflicted with leprosy or gonorrhoea, those women who were menstruating, or persons otherwise defiled were debarred from partaking in the sacrifices, (427) as were many foreigners present for worship, and a large number of these assembled from abroad [*d*].

Searching for concealed persons

(428) But now fate had decreed that one prison should confine the whole nation, and that war should encompass the city, packed as it was with people. The victims thus outnumbered by far those of any previous destruction [*d*] wrought by God or man. (429) For after every man who showed himself had either been killed or captured by the Romans, those in the underground passages were ferreted out; the ground was torn up, and all those found there were killed. (430) There too were found the bodies of more than two thousand, some slain by their own hands, some by another's; but most of them died by starvation. (431) So foul a stench from the bodies greeted the intruders that many withdrew instantly. But others penetrated farther, drawn by avarice, trampling over piles of corpses; (432) for many precious objects were found in these passages and lucre rendered every means of acquiring it legal. Many prisoners of the tyrants were brought up, for even in the end they did not abandon their brutality. (433) But God rewarded them both as they deserved: John, starving to death with his men in the underground passages at last appealed to the Romans for mercy after having spurned it so often, while Simon, after battling long with the inevitable, as will be related further [*a*], gave himself up. Simon was kept for execution at the triumph [*b*] (434) and John was sentenced to life imprisonment. The Romans now ignited the outlying quarters of the city [*c*] and razed the walls to the ground [*d*].

Chapter X

1. A brief chronicle of the previous times
Jerusalem was captured

(435) Thus did Jerusalem fall in the second year of Vespasian's reign, on the eighth of the month of Gorpiaeus [*a*]. It had been captured five times [*b*] before and now devastated for the second time [*c*]; (436) for Asochaeus [*a*], king of Egypt, followed by Antiochus [*b*], then Pompey [*c*], and subsequently Sossius [*d*] in league with Herod subdued the city but spared it. (437) But before their days the king of Babylon [*a*] had conquered it and laid it waste, 1, 468 years and 6

estimate of the total Jewish population. What can be determined from other sources? We learn from the Syrian church historian *Bar Hebraeus* that the number of Jews living in the Roman Empire under the emperor Claudius was 6,944,000. As the Jewish population in the Diaspora was presumed to be four million (including a million Jews in Egypt), we are left with roughly two million Jews in Judaea. The country had been very thickly populated since Herodian days but decreased in numbers during the wars of AD 66-70. As noted in 420[*a*] above, far more than a quarter of a million Jews perished in Jerusalem and possibly in other towns as well. The decisive fact is that the Judaean mountain massif and Galilee remained extensively Jewish. Nevertheless, the Jewish population seems to have decreased to about 1,500,000 at the time of the subsequent great Bar-Kokhba revolt of AD 132-135, although large enough to wage another war against Rome. The population shrank to about 800,000 after this war, considering the number of its victims, which Dio Cassius estimates at "985 villages taken by the Roman armies... and 500,000 killed" (*ibid.*, XIX, 4). The Jewish population increased steadily in the latter half of the 2nd century AD and attained a great degree of prosperity in late Roman and early Byzantine times (3rd-5th centuries AD) except in the Jerusalem area, where Jews were banned.

423[*b*] *Between the ninth and the eleventh hour* or 3-5 PM.

425[*c*] Cf. 422[*a*].

428[*d*] *Destruction* Josephus sounds the right note by indicating that the vast carnage exceeded anything else in history, Jewish or otherwise.

433[*a*] See *War* VII, 25-36.

433[*b*] *Triumph* Seven hundred prisoners distinguished for their handsome appearance, together with the ringleaders Simon-bar-Giora and John of Gischala, were reserved for the triumphal procession and some of these for execution (*War* VII, 96-118). Their end was completely different from that of the thousands of the more heroic Zealots and Sicarii, since they never committed suicide nor fell in battle.

434[*c*] *Outlying quarters* The suburbs of Jerusalem outside the walls.

434[*d*] *Razed... ground* This is only partly true, as exceptions were made of the three towers Hippicus, Phasael, and Mariamme (cf. 413 above) and part of the lower strands of the city-walls standing above bedrock. The first were left as memorials of the city's former strength, the others as protection for the Roman garrison remaining behind. These imposing segments of huge ashlars may be observed today west of the Armenian quarter of the Old City (site of Herod's palace), along the southern and eastern walls as uncovered by recent excavations, and rising to a height of several meters above bedrock (see illustrations).

435[*a*] *Gorpiaeus,* or October (AD 70).

435[*b*] In this brief summing up of the city's captures, Josephus has ommitted those which occurred under King Jehoash (II Kings 14, 8-13) and the Egyptian Ptolemy Soter (as related in *Antiq.* XII, 3).

435[*c*] *Second time* The first total devastation related to Nebuchadnezzar's in 586 BC.

436[*a*] *Asochaeus,* namely Shishak (Shoshenk) who captured Jerusalem and a large part of the kingdom of Judah and Israel in 925 BC.

436[*b*] *Antiochus* Epiphanes, as related in our commentary to *War* I, 19, 41-38.

436[*c*] *Pompey,* cf. *War* I, 127-158.

436[*d*] *Sossius,* in 37 BC; cf. *War* I, 345 ff.

437[*a*] *King of Babylon* Nebuchadnezzar, in 586 BC. Cf. II Kings 25.

437[*b*] *Its founding* Josephus' chronological system of 1468 years and six months is uncertain; however, later historians erred no less. More exact dates have been ascertained only in recent years, as summed up in the *Hebrew Encyclopedia Biblica,* vol. IV, p. 244-307, beginning with the reign of King David. Josephus' figure rests on presumed dates, probably derived from biblical data and later *Midrashim* (commentaries) summing up the succesive generations of Hebrews from Patriarchal times to the founding of the kingdom by King David, then adding the *regnal* periods of the kings until 586 BC.

438[*c*] *Righteous king,* namely Melchizedek in Hebrew, meaning "king of righteousness" or "my king is Zedek"; or, as mentioned in Abraham's epic in Genesis 14, 18, as the king of *Shālem,* the archaic name of Jerusalem (Yerushalem in Hebrew parlance). "The name Shalem is rooted in its earliest origins. Shalem may well have been its abbreviation" (B. Mazar, p. 40). Jerusalem became the first major city to be captured by King David. In its initial stages it was called the "City of David" (approximately 1000-965 BC); King Solomon began constructing the Temple in 964 BC. What ancient sources, or *midrash,* Josephus drew on to state that the city was founded by Melchizedek and that a temple was built by him, are not known. All we know is that the little city that dated apparently from the Bronze Age (early second millennium BC) and lay on the western flank of the ridge known as "Zion," south of the present Temple Mount, was called Jebus or Ir-hayebusi (town of the Jebusites, a Canaanite town) from about 1200-1000 BC. "This was an ethnic-geographic name identifying it with its inhabitants in the period of Judges, before its capture by King David" (*ibid.*).

438[*d*] *Solyma* Apparently the Greek rendering of Shālem (cf. note 438[*c*]).

439[*a*] *477 years and 6 months* Moreover, if we base the reign of David from 1000 BC onward and substract 586 (the BC date of the destruction) we get 414 years, a smaller figure than Josephus'.

440[*b*] *The period from King David to... Titus* As stated in 436[*b*], the period from 1000 BC to AD 70 would be 1070 years instead of Josephus' 1179.

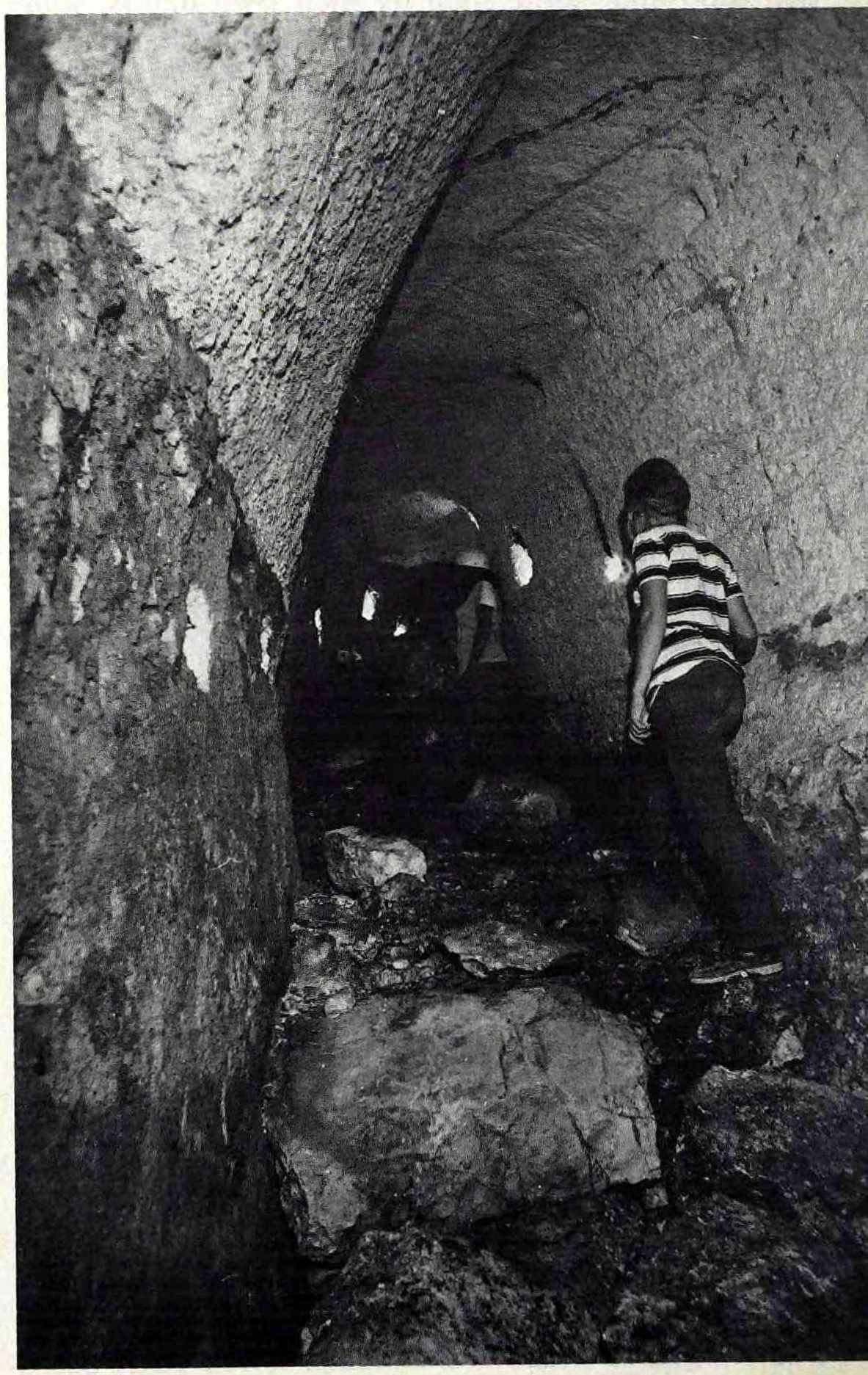
441[*c*] *Final overthrow 2,177* This chronological estimate, as indicated in note 436[*b*], is uncertain, since the precise date of the foundation of Jerusalem is unknown.

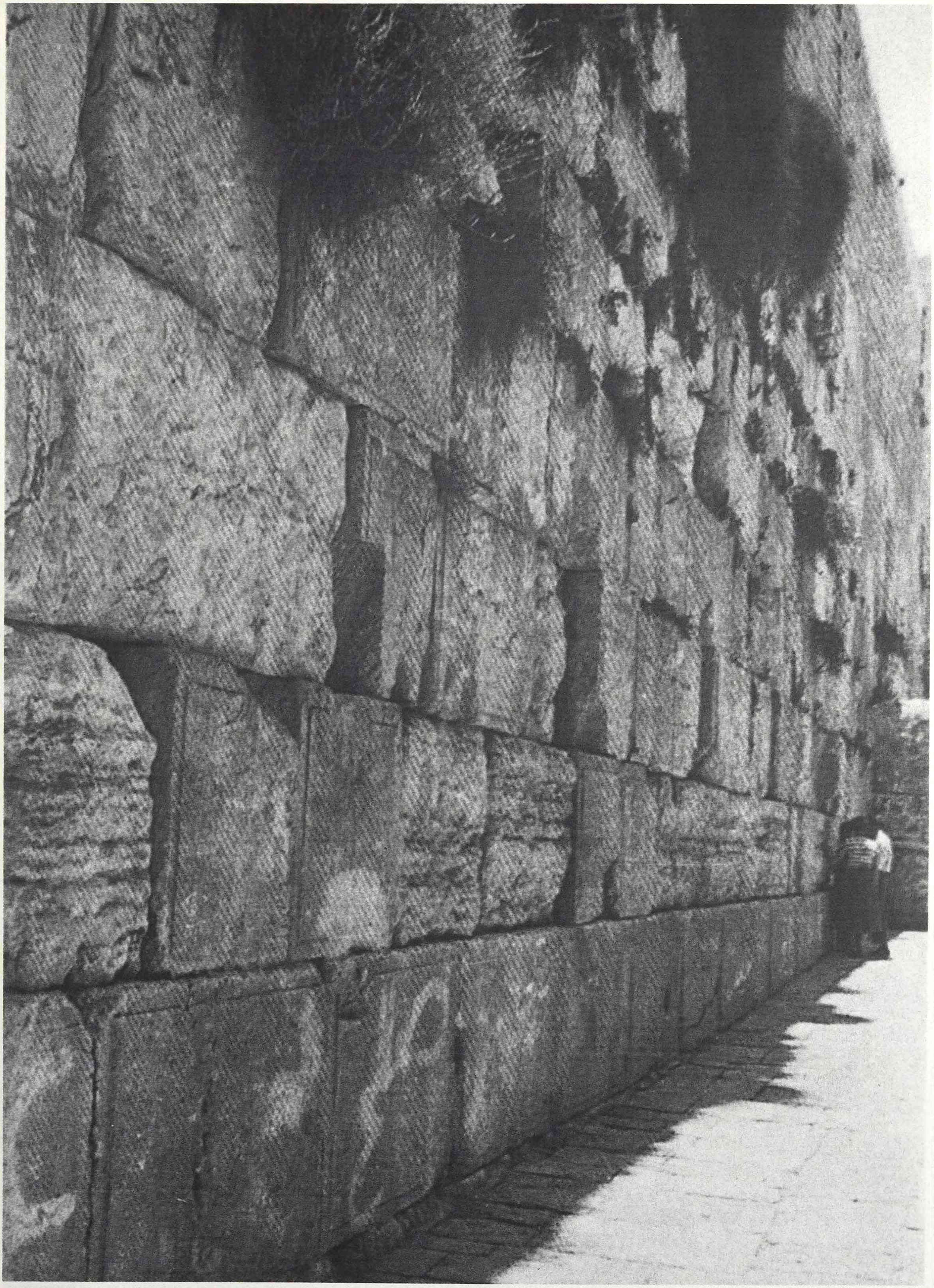
442[*d*] *Its utter destruction* Josephus, as explained throughout this book, blamed the ruin of the celebrated and rich metropolis on the militancy and recklessness of the Zealots and their chiefs, whom he branded as "bandits." But the situation in Judaea stemmed also from the brutality and incompetence of the Roman procurators, by exasperating demographic pressures brought on by the precarious state of coexistence between the Jews and a large pagan population in a densely populated land and crowded towns such as Caesarea; and finally by agrarian and economic pressures that weighed heavily on both the rural and urban populations. Moreover, there was no possible conciliation with the Zealots, as stated above (353[*c*]). Titus' behavior, on the other hand, was strictly governed by the ruthless "laws of war." Because the Zealots resisted and continued fighting after their defenses had fallen rather than surrendering, he brought this "utter destruction" on Jerusalem. This dire calamity could possibly have been averted had the pacifist elements among the Jews, both within and outside of Judaea, had a say in the matter, or had they been able to cope somehow with the headlong war against Rome. In historical retrospect, the utter destruction that Josephus deplored so bitterly was even greater than he could realize, for it prevented the once-flourishing Jewish people from becoming, for at least four centuries, one of the most important ethnic, religious, and economic elements in the Near East. This void, after the fall of Rome, was filled by the Christian-Byzantine empire and, shortly thereafter, by the Islamic empire.

Conclusion: The Jews never accepted the humiliation and defeat marked by the ruin of the Temple that symbolized their nation and way of life. Although some religious and cultural satisfaction was found, subsequently, in the synagogue, the *beth-midrash* (house of learning), and in the preservation of their unique civilization, they dreamed forever of the restoration of the Temple. This hope was to inspire all the struggles and messianic expectations of the succeeding centuries and was in part historically realized in the past one hundred years by spiritual Zionism, the revival of Hebrew as the national language, and the creation of the State of Israel in 1948.

months after its founding [*b*]. (438) The city was founded by a Canaanite chief called the "Righteous King" [*c*] in the vernacular, and such indeed he was. On that account he was the first to serve as a priest of God, the first to build the Temple, and gave the city, previously called Solyma [*d*], the name of Jerusalem. (439) The Canaanite population was driven out by David, the king of the Jews, who settled his own people there; and 477 years and 6 months [*a*] after his time, it was destroyed by the Babylonians [*a*]. (440) The period from King David, the first Jew to reign in it, to its destruction by Titus, was 1,179 years [*b*], (441) and from its foundation until its final overthrow 2,177 [*c*]. (442) But neither its long history, its vast wealth, its people dispersed over the whole habitable world, nor the unparalleled glory of its religious rites, sufficed to avert its utter destruction [*d*]. So ended the siege of Jerusalem.

This rock-hewn subterranean conduit, unearthed below the Triple Hulda gate, leads deep into the underground of the Temple Mount. It may have communicated with the lower levels of the Temple's inner structures. This is one of the two underground passages running below the level of the southern wall





The outer Western Wall of Temple Mount

BOOK VII

1[*a*] *Phasael, Hippicus and Mariamme;* cf. *War* VI, 409[*a*].

1[*b*] *The wall on the west* referred to is the "First Wall" which defended the northwestern and northeastern edges of the city. The Herodian and Hasmonean (lower) layers of this wall were revealed in recent excavations, as illustrated.

3[*c*] *Once been inhabited* Subsequent events provide a different picture. Following the destruction of Jerusalem, which entirely depopulated the city, nothing remained of the walls and strongholds which surrounded Jerusalem except the lower sections of the huge retaining walls of the city and the retaining walls of the Temple area which were still more or less intact up to varying heights, as well as the Double and Triple Hulda Gates and stairs leading up to them (illustrations). In Byzantine times and after the occupation of Jerusalem by the Arabs from the 7th century AD, many sections of the walls were raised over the ancient remains of the retaining walls. In general terms, the walls enclosing the city were rebuilt on the line usually ascribed to *Aelia Capitolina,* the Roman colony or city rebuilt by Hadrian over the ruins of Jerusalem (see Madeba map).

5[*a*] *Tenth legion,* called *Legio Decima Fretensis; cf. 17*[*a*] below.

6[*b*] *Former camp-site* On Mount Scopus. See map of the siege in Book VI.

7[*c*] *The size of cities,* etc. An expression apparently borrowed from a Thucydidean source (cf. *War* III, 82, 3; IV, 23).

8[*d*] *They,* in the plural, applies to Vespasian's supporters, and it included the soldiers who hailed Titus. It alluded to the Flavian dynasty founded by Vespasian.

A. THE SEQUEL OF THE WAR

Chapter I

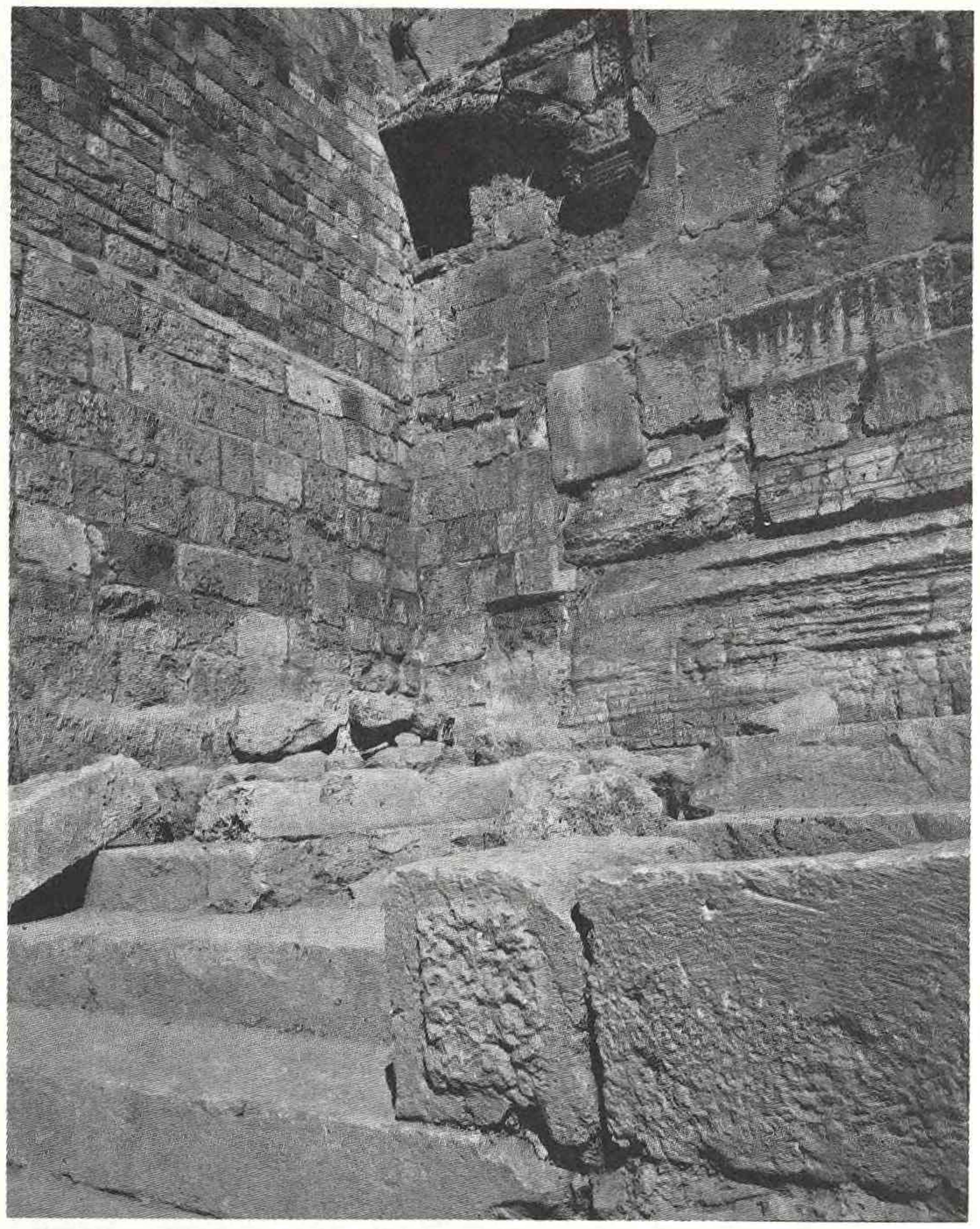
The Destruction of Jerusalem. Roman celebrations

1. (1) There were no more victims for the army to kill or plunder, and no soul on which to vent their rage; for mercy would never have made them keep their hands off anyone as long as there was work to be done. Caesar consequently ordered them to raze the whole city and the Temple, leaving only the loftiest of the towers—Phasael, Hippicus, and Mariamme [*a*]—and the stretch of wall enclosing the city on the west [*b*]; (2) the last-mentioned to serve as a camp for the garrison that was to remain, and the towers in order to show later generations the might of the city that had been conquered by Roman prowess. (3) All the rest of the wall encircling the city was so completely leveled to the ground that no future visitors would believe that it had once been inhabited [*c*]. (4) This, then, was the end to which the mad folly of revolutionaries brought Jerusalem, that magnificent city renowned throughout the world.

A topical remnant of the great metropolis, which lay in ruins: The "Triple Hulda Gates" of Temple Mount led to the vast "Solomon Stables" (built by Herod), which served as stores and pens for the animals prepared for sacrifice at the three pilgrimage festivals. A vast urban area extended south and north of these gates, covering the Ophel, *the Lower City, Mount Zion, an area very much larger than the present Old City. Greater Jerusalem covered also a large area north of the Old City. See color photo*

2. Titus' panegyric to the army

(5) Caesar decided to leave the tenth legion [*a*] as a local garrison, along with some squadrons of horse and infantry. Having now settled all problems related to the war, he desired to commend the whole army for its achievements and to confer suitable rewards on those who had especially distinguished themselves. (6) A spacious dais was accordingly constructed for him in the center of his former campsite [*b*], and there he took his stand, flanked by his principal officers, where the whole army could hear him. (7) He expressed his deep gratitude for their unfailing loyalty to him. He praised them for their ready obedience throughout the war, manifested with personal heroism in so many dangerous situations. Thus by their own efforts they enhanced the power of their country and demonstrated to all mankind that neither the numbers of the enemy, the strength of strongholds, the size of cities [*c*], nor the reckless daring and brutal savagery of their antagonists could frustrate the valor of Romans, even though some of their foes so often found an ally in fortune. (8) It had been a glorious feat, indeed (said he), to have brought to an end a war that had raged so long; for they [*d*] could not have wished for a happier result when they embarked on it.



The immured "Double Hulda Gate" of Temple Mount shown here was reached by a wide flight of steps (reconstructed recently). The whole southern stretch south of the gates was covered by the ruined walls and columns of the upper porticoes, as Josephus saw them. The area south of the gates, the ancient Ophel, *was carefully excavated by B. Mazar's archaeological expedition and transformed into a national park and outdoor museum of Herodian Jerusalem*

The Madeba mosaic map of Jerusalem in the 4th to 6th centuries AD forms part of a topographic map of the Bible lands and was discovered in a 6th century church at Madeba, in Transjordan. It describes Aelia Capitolina, *(top) the small city rebuilt by Emperor Hadrian (2nd century AD). This was a miniature Jerusalem, and a city forbidden to the Jews. The area is covered by the Old City*

17[a] *Tenth legion... to guard Jerusalem* The most noteworthy finds of the period following this occupation are a small group of bronze and silver coins, mainly city and imperial issues from Vespasian (1st century AD) to Hadrian (first part of the 2nd century) with several of the *Iudaea Capta* (Captive Judea) type, and a number of Nabataean coins, two of King Agrippa II, and two of the Bar-Kochba type. The building activities of the *Legio X Fretensis* in the area facing the retaining Western Wall of the Temple are evidenced mainly by bricks and rooftiles, stamped LXF (Legio Decima Fretensis), including many bearing the legion's stamps (illustration) and remains of a large Roman bath. Another most interesting discovery was a large fragment of a column found fixed in the foundation of a later Arab building. Its restored Latin inscription contains this information:
The first four lines commemorate the Emperor Caesar Vespasian Augustus (AD 69–79) and his son Titus Caesar Vespasian (AD 79–81). The last three lines mention the commander of the Tenth Legion Fretensis, apparently Lucius Flavius Silva, whose name has been scratched out for unknown reasons. He is Silva, the commanding officer who captured Masada after a bitter siege in AD 74, and served as governor of the New Roman province of Judaea from AD 73–80. What has survived may be only part of a larger commemorative inscription erected during the reign of Titus. The true significance of this inscription lies in its allusion to the new status of Jerusalem which was transformed from a flourishing metropolis and revered holy place into a devastated ruin, hardly more than a military base for the Roman garrison (B. Mazar, *ibid.*, p. 233).
Other inscriptions refer to the discharge in AD 63 of veterans who had served in the Tenth Legion Fretensis. (See p. 481 relating to the Roman inscriptions.)

18[b] *Twelfth legion which succumbed to the Jews* Cf. *War* II, 500 ff.

18[c] *Raphanaeae,* in northwestern Syria, west of Homs. *Melitine, Cappadocia,* east of Asia Minor.

19[d] *The fifth and fifteenth* The Macedonian and Appolinaris legions, respectively.

Below and right:
Tiles bearing round stamps, of the Legio X Fretensis. *The material remains found at the foot of Temple Mount include numerous Roman bricks, and columns stamped with the seal of the Tenth Legion, LXFRE, dating to the 2nd century AD. Fragments of statues are related to the temple of Jupiter erected on the Mount. The large statue of a youth preserves most of the body, though the head is missing. The woman on the left is dressed in typical 2nd–3rd centuries costume and standing on a pedestal engraved with the Latin inscription: "Valeria Emiliana dedicated (it) by her vow"*

Praise for having raised the Flavian dynasty to the throne

(9) But a more glorious and splendid tribute to them was the fact that they had elected and sent to the fatherland as governors and rulers of the Roman Empire men who were hailed with universal satisfaction, whose decisions were loyally obeyed, and whose electors were regarded with gratitude. (10) Therefore (he went on) he was full of admiration and affection for them all, knowing that every man's ability had been entirely equalled by his enthusiasm. (11) However, there were those whose fighting had been blessed by superior energy, not only shedding a luster on their own lives by deeds of gallantry, but making his campaign still more famous by their exploits; on these he would immediately bestow honors and distinctions, and not a man who had chosen to exert himself more than his companions should miss his reward. (12) He would indeed give this matter special attention, since he was more interested in rewarding the valorous deeds of his fellow-soldiers than in punishing the slackers among them.

3. Awards and honors to the army

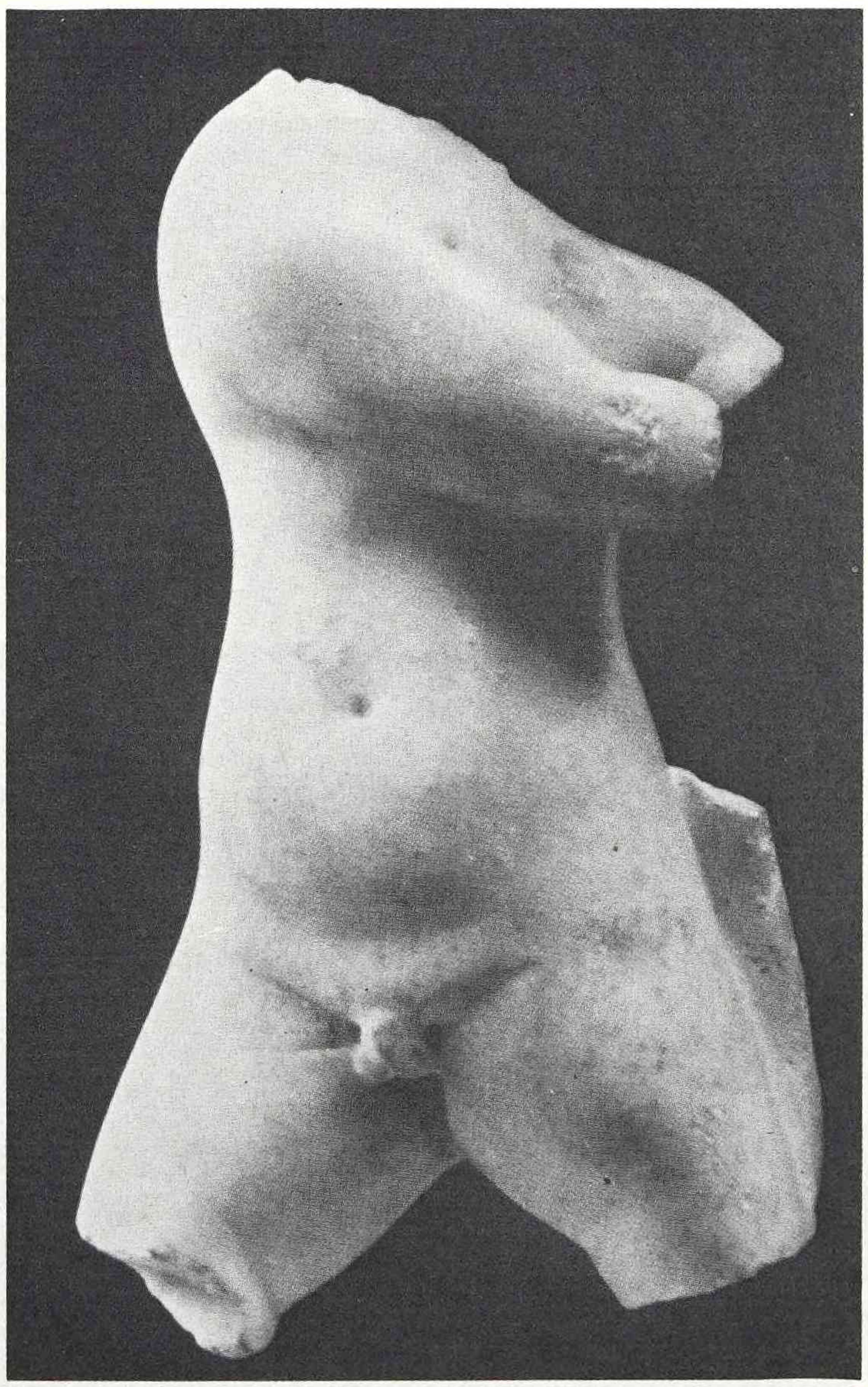
(13) Accordingly, he immediately ordered the appointed officers to read out the names of all who had performed any outstanding feats in the course of the war. (14) Calling them up by name, he praised them as they came forward, no less delighted than a man could be over his own exploits. He then put golden crowns upon their heads, gave them golden neck-chains, miniature golden spears and silver standards, and promoted every man to a higher rank. (15) In addition he assigned to them, out of the spoils, silver and gold, garments, and a large amount of other booty. (16) When all had been rewarded as he judged each to have merited, he invoked blessings on behalf of the whole army, stepped down amid thunderous applause,

and proceeded to offer thanksgiving sacrifices in honor of his victory. A great number of oxen were herded around the altars, and he sacrificed them all and divided them among the troops for a victory feast.

Disposition of the army. Titus' departure for Caesarea

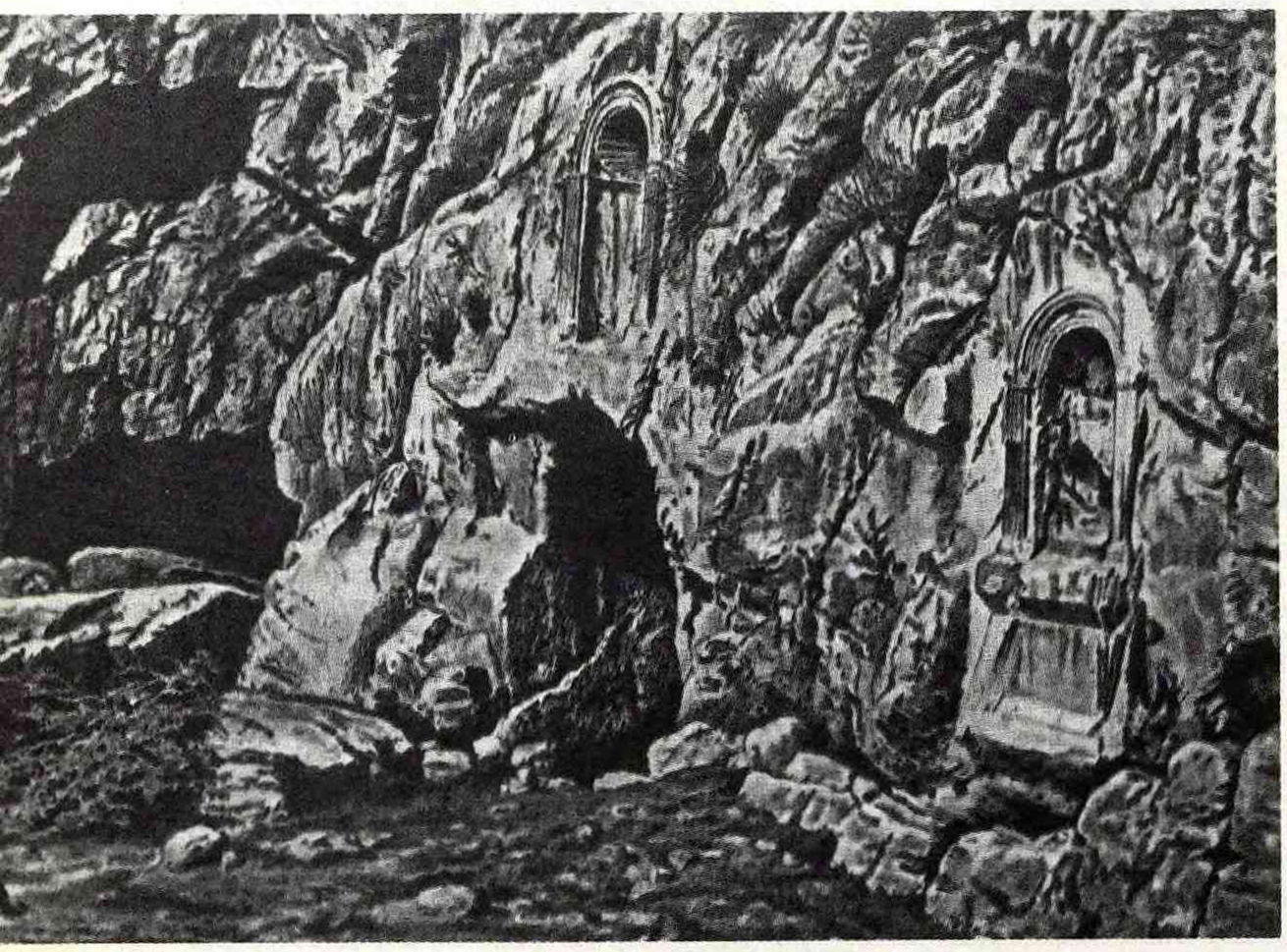
(17) After spending three days celebrating with his staff officers, he dispatched the bulk of the army to its selected destinations; however, he detailed the tenth legion to guard Jerusalem [*a*] instead of sending it back to the Euphrates, its former station. (18) Remembering, too, that while Cestius was in command, the twelfth legion had succumbed to the Jews [*b*], he banished them from Syria altogether—for they had earlier been quartered at Raphanaeae [*c*]—and dispatched them to the district called Melitene, beside the Euphrates, on the borders of Armenia and Cappadocia. (19) Two legions—the fifth and the fifteenth [*d*]—he decided to retain with himself until he arrived in Egypt. (20) Then he went down with his army to Caesarea-on-the-sea, where he deposited the bulk of the booty and ordered his prisoners to be kept in custody, for the winter season precluded the voyage to Italy.

A galley engraved on a sarcophagus found in Sidon, 2nd century AD. Triremes had three banks of oars



21[*a*] *Rhodes* An island off the southwestern coast of Asia Minor, also mentioned in Herod's story.
22[*b*] *Triremes* Galleys having three banks of oars, as illustrated.
22[*c*] *Ionia* The southwestern region of Asia Minor that bordered on the Aegean islands situated between it and the Greek mainland.
22[*d*] *Corcyra* Modern Corfu, the island northwest of Greece.
22[*e*] *Promontory of Iapygia* The southern corner of Italy and edge of the Appenine peninsula; this was the end of Vespasian's sea journey. The last two paragraphs are intended to keep Vespasian in the picture. The author returns to the subject in para. 63 ff.
23[*a*] *Caesarea-on-the-sea (Maritima)* To differentiate it from Caesarea Philippi, a new city in northern Palestine (Modern Banias; *War* II, 168; III, 443, 510). Josephus does not say whether the Herodian King Agrippa II was present at the time. The city was part of his domain and, in line with his steadfast pacifist and pro-Roman policy, he helped them in their war against the Jews (Cf. *War* II, 345–401).
24[*b*] The Jewish prisoners were forced to kill each other in gladiatorial combat.
25[*a*]–27[*a*]–29[*a*] *The old passage* One of the passages which started apparently from a lower opening at the southern or eastern retaining wall and led underground to the foot of the high platform (the Ḥel) over which the Temple was built. B. Mazar describes a passage discovered under the Single Gate:
"The entrance to the passage is 34 m. west of the southern corner of the area. It is 21 m. long, 1 m. wide, and 3.5 m. high, as illustrated. The passage was certainly built together with the massive southern supporting wall of the Temple Mount... The end of the underground passage at its northern extremity is a doorway which probably leads to a hall lying below the so-called Solomon Stables" (*ibid.*, p. 126–127).
As previously observed, various underground passages were known to run beneath the Temple Mount esplanade, and one of these was apparently used by Simon's party and the stone-carvers who accompanied him. The versimilitude of the story is heightened by B. Mazar's description.
32[*b*] *Delivered by God* Josephus could not help expressing his hatred of Simon and his excesses, and the sense of relief when Simon met his end.

The Hellenist shrine devoted to the god Pan situated near one of Jordan's sources, southwest of Mount Hermon, and site of the city of Caesarea Philippi



Chapter II

1. The celebrations. Vespasian's voyage to Italy

(21) Now at the time when Titus Caesar was busy directing the siege of Jerusalem, Vespasian, embarking on a merchant-vessel, crossed over from Alexandria to Rhodes [*a*]. (22) From there he sailed on triremes [*b*], calling at every city on the way and being welcomed everywhere with ovations. He proceeded from Ionia [*c*] to Greece, and from there via Corcyra [*d*] to the promontory of Iapygia [*e*], whence he continued his journey overland.

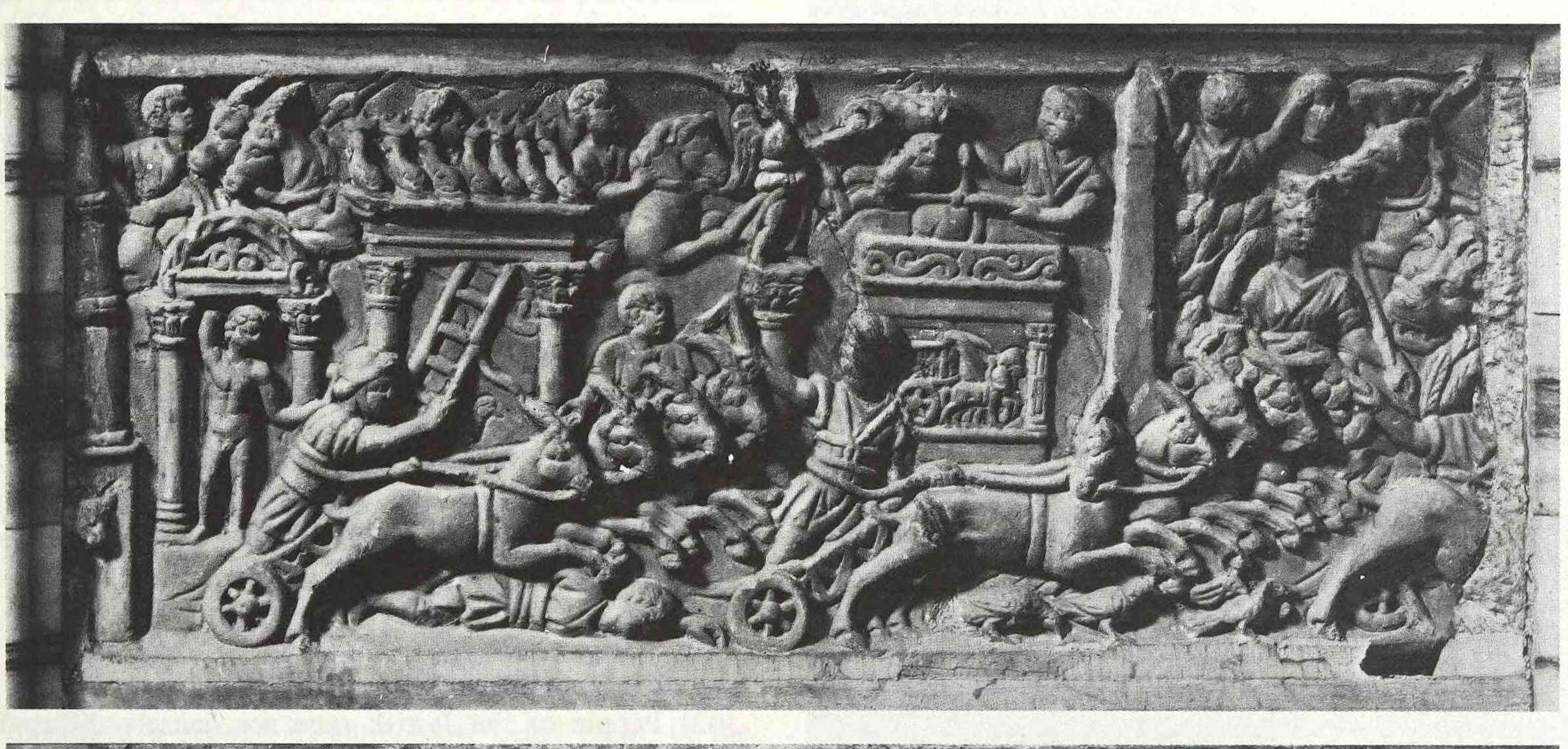
The celebrations at Caesarea Philippi

(23) From Caesarea-on-the-sea [*a*] Titus now marched to the then-named Caesarea Philippi [*a*], where he stayed for a long time exhibiting spectacles of every kind. (24) Many of the prisoners perished there, some thrown to wild beasts, others forced to meet each other in deadly combat [*b*]. (25) Here also Titus was informed of the capture of Simon, son of Gioras, which had happened as follows [*a*].

2. Simon's strange capture

(26) During the siege of Jerusalem, Simon had occupied the Upper City, but when the Roman army was already inside the walls and was sacking the whole city, he took with him his most trustworthy friends, as well as stone-cutters equipped with the tools of their craft, and supplies of food for many days, and, thus accompanied, let himself down into one of the secret passages. (27) They advanced through the old passage as far as it went; but when they reached solid earth, they tried to mine their way through, hoping to proceed ahead, emerge at a safe spot, and thus escape [*a*]. (28) But when the task was attempted, their hope was baffled; the miners made slow, difficult progress and though they husbanded their provisions carefully, they were nearly exhausted. (29) So Simon, thinking that he could deceive the Romans by creating a panic, dressed himself up in white tunics and, fastening over them a purple cape, he emerged suddenly out of the ground at the very spot where the Temple had once stood [*a*]. (30) At first those who saw him stood aghast and did not move, but after a while they came nearer and asked who he was. (31) This Simon refused to tell, and bade them summon the general. They ran to fetch him, and Terentius Rufus, left in command of the army, appeared at once. After hearing the whole truth from Simon, he kept him fettered and reported to Caesar how he was captured. (32) Thus justly punished for his brutality to his fellow-citizens, whom he had subjected to such inhuman tyranny, Simon was delivered by God [*b*] into the hands of his bitterest enemies. (33) He had not been subjected by force, but spontaneously gave himself up for punishment—the very act for which he had put many to a cruel death on false charges of defection to the Romans. (34) For

The Roman games in the amphitheater of Caesarea ran a close parallel to those celebrated yearly in Rome, as shown by these Roman sculptures:
Above: Charioteers and horses in a race at the arena in Rome
Below: These two views express vividly the overwhelming excitement at the races in the arenas (ancient sculptures from the Vatican Museum and the Lapidario Museum)



37[*a*] *Brother's birthday* On October 24, his 18th birthday. Quintilian seems to indicate that Domitian even wrote a poem extolling his brother's victory over the Jews.

38[*b*] *Burned alive* Like the *auto-da-fe's* perpetrated by the Inquisition against the Jews and other "heretics" in the Middle Ages. Twenty-five hundred human torches, as part of the game, were gory refinement, and this is again repeated in para. 40 below.

39[*c*] *Berytus* Modern Beirut in Lebanon.

39[*d*] *His father's birthday* In November AD 70, his 61st.

41[*a*] *Remnant of the Jews* A surprising qualification, considering the large size of the contemporary Jewish population in AD 70, as defined in para. and note 43[*a*] below.

43[*a*] *Antioch* had been the capital of the Seleucids, and later the capital of the Roman province of Syria. This lent particular importance to the contemporary Jewish community there, placing it in the same rank as the populous communities of Alexandria and Rome. Josephus reports that civil rights were granted to the Jews in Antioch by its founder, Seleuces I (*Antiq.* XII, 119), presumably only to a minority of Jewish ex-soldiers. During the Seleucid period they attained extensive *politeia* (community) privileges (*War* VII, 110). Under the Romans the Jewish community in Antioch continued to grow and develop.

43[*b*] *Antiochus,* namely Antiochus I, the second Seleucid monarch, who succeeded Alexander the Great, reigning 280–261 BC.

44[*c*] *Antiochus IV* (Epiphanes) ruled from 175–164 BC. Cf. *War* I, 35 ff. Josephus' statements on Antioch are contradictory, for in one place he derives Jewish privileges from Antiochus I (cf. 43[*b*]) and in another from the successors of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who were less extreme than the former.

Domitian (Vatican Museum)

wickedness cannot evade God's wrath, and justice is not weak; but in due course she overtakes those who have transgressed against her and inflicts heavier vengeance on the sinners when they imagine that they are out of reach because punishment has not been immediate. This was brought home to Simon when he fell into the hands of the furious Romans. (35) Moreover, his emergence from the ground led in those days to the discovery of many other partisans in the subterranean passages. (36) When Caesar returned to Caesarea-on-the sea, Simon was brought before him in fetters, and he ordered him to be kept prisoner for the triumph he intended to celebrate in Rome.

Chapter III

1. Celebrations in honor of Titus' family

(37) While he remained at Caesarea Titus celebrated his brother's birthday [*a*] with great splendor, dedicating to his honor on this occasion much of the punishment of his Jewish captives. (38) For the number of those who perished in combats with wild beasts, or in fighting each other, or by being burned alive [*b*] exceeded twenty-five hundred [*b*]. Yet all this seemed to the Romans too light a penalty, though their victims were dying in a myriad of ways. (39) After this Caesar went on to Berytus [*c*], a city in Phoenicia and a Roman colony. Here he made a longer stay, celebrating his father's birthday [*d*] with still greater magnificence both in the expense of the spectacles and in the originality of the other costly entertainments. (40) Multitudes of prisoners perished in the same way as others had before.

2. The Jews of Antioch in peril

(41) It happened about this time that the remnant of the Jews [*a*] of Antioch were charged with crimes and in danger of destruction, for the local Antiochene population had been roused against them both in consequence of slanders laid to their charge and by certain events that had occurred shortly before. (42) Of these I will first give a short introduction, in order to make my account of what occurred more intelligible.

3. History of the Jews of Antioch

(43) People of the Jewish race are densely diffused among the native populations all over the world, especially in Syria, where intermingling is due to the proximity of the two countries. They congregated especially at Antioch [*a*] owing to the large size of the city but still more because the successors of King Antiochus [*b*] had made it safe for them to settle there. (44) For, although Antiochus called Epiphanes [*c*] sacked Jerusalem and looted the Temple, his successors in kingship restored all the votive offerings made in brass to the Jews of Antioch as a gift to be laid in

their synagogue and, further, granted them the same citizens' privileges as the Greeks. (45) As the later kings continued to treat them in the same way, the Jewish population grew in numbers, and their elaborate and richly designed offerings formed a beautiful ornament to the Temple. Moreover, they were continually attracting to their religious ceremonies a great number of Greeks and they had in some measure virtually made them members of their own community.

The dangerous intrigue of the renegade Antiochus

(46) But at the time war was declared, when Vespasian had just landed in Syria and when the universal hatred of the Jews [*a*] was at its height, (47) a certain Antiochus, a Jew himself [*b*] and greatly respected because of his father, who was chief magistrate of the Jews of Antioch, went into the theater during an assembly of the people and denounced his own father and the other Jews, accusing them of a conspiracy to burn down the city in a single night. He also handed over some foreign Jews as accomplices to the plot. (48) When the people heard this, they could not contain their fury, and demanded that the men who had been delivered to them be at once consigned to the flames, and then and there they were all burned to death in the theater. (49) The crowd then attacked the Jewish masses, believing that the salvation of their own native land depended on their swift punishment. (50) Antiochus whetted their anger still more: he thought he could provide proof of his conversion and of his hatred of Jewish customs by sacrificing according to Greek rites, (51) and he recommended that the others should be compelled to do the same, for the conspirators would then be exposed by their refusal. When the Antiochenes applied this test, a few gave way and those who refused were put to death [*a*]. (52) Antiochus, having now procured soldiers from the Roman general, began to tyrannize his Jewish fellow citizens, not allowing them to rest on the seventh day but forcing them to do everything exactly as on other days. (53) So strictly did he compel obedience that not only at Antioch was the weekly day of rest abolished but, starting from there, the example was enforced for a short time in the other cities as well [*b*].

4. The great fire at Antioch attributed to the Jews

(54) After the Jews of Antioch had suffered these miseries, a second calamity now befell them, to the story of which the previous events will serve as a prologue. (55) It happened that a fire broke out and destroyed the market square, the magistrates' quarters, the record-office, and the basilicas [*a*], the flames having with great difficulty been prevented from sweeping violently through the whole city, Antiochus accused the Jews of the act. (56) Even if they had not been previously embittered against them, the Antiochenes would in the uproar following the accident have been quick to believe this calumny; and by

46[*a*] *Hatred of the Jews* At the height of the Jewish war with Rome, probably AD 70 or before.

47[*b*] *Antiochus* The renegade Jew and son of the *archon* of the Jews of Antioch, who made common cause with the Jew-baiters, is reminiscent of another renowned convert, Tiberius Alexander, the son of the Jewish archon of Alexandria (*War* II, 492 ff., 497; IV, 66; VI, 237, 242).

51[*a*] *Put to death* The Jews who were forced to bring sacrifices in the Greek fashion were apparently those who claimed citizenship rights — for how could the early anti-Semites "tolerate" any fellow citizen whose behavior differed in any way from theirs?

53[*b*] *Other cities as well* Other Syrian towns were naturally influenced by what was going on in the capital and followed suit at the time when Jewish prestige was at its lowest. However, Mucianus, the Roman governor of Syria and adherent of Vespasian (*War* IV, 32, 495, 605 ff.), managed to restrain the persecutions, but they were resumed shortly afterwards when he left his post as governor of Syria and returned to Italy as the agent of Vespasian.

55[*a*] *Record-office* The municipal archive. *Basilicas:* the law courts and exchange. The burning of the municipal archives parallels the course of the Jewish rebels in Jerusalem (*War* II, 427; IV, 354) who wanted to wipe out all evidence of their indebtedness. The persecutions, which Mucianus managed to restrain, were resumed shortly after he left.

Syrian commoner of southern Italy (Museum of Naples)

57[*b*] The populace was in such a state of panic and confusion that it was ready to believe anything against the Jews. This happened during the interregnum before the arrival of Mucianus' successor, governor Caesennius Paetus.

58[*c*] *Gnaeus Collega,* namely Pompeius Collega, the governor's legate.

59[*d*] *Caesennius Paetus,* a former consul who was defeated by the Parthians in AD 63 and signed a treaty with them, while Monobazus, King of Adiabene (*War* V, 522–523) acted as witness, either proving the importance the Romans attached to this ally of the Jews, or for another reason which Josephus does not specify. Cf. 219[*b*], 220[*c*] below.

65[*a*] *Succession of emperors* Four emperors succeeded one another in rapid succession between AD 68 and 69; Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius (cf. *War* IV, 494, 546–549, 654 ff.).

73[*b*] *Tribes* A vestige of the early elements of Roman society.

73[*c*] *Neighborhoods* Groups living in the same quarter of metropolitan Rome. Before Vespasian arrived in Rome in the summer of AD 70, Mucianus (the former governor of Syria) was practically ruler of Rome, paving the way for Vespasian's homecoming. By that time the capital had been rebuilt "and a beginning had been made with the reconstitution of the praetorian cohorts" (CAH X, p. 839).

A Roman ironsmith's workshop

what had occurred previously they were now more ready to be misled into believing Antiochus' statements and to convince themselves they had as good as seen with their own eyes the Jews setting fire to the city. (57) And so, like maniacs [*b*], they all rushed in an absolute frenzy on the accused. (58) With the greatest difficulty Gnaeus Collega [*c*], the governor's deputy, succeeded in checking their fury, requesting permission to present the facts before Caesar; (59) for though the governor of Syria, Caesennius Paetus [*d*], had already been sent out by Vespasian, it happened that he had not yet arrived. (60) By painstaking inquiry Collega found out the truth. Not one of the Jews on whom Antiochus had laid the blame had any share in the affair, (61) the whole being the work of some unscrupulous wretches who, unable to settle their debts, believed that if they burned the marketplace and the public records, they would be rid of their indebtedness. (62) The Jews, with these accusations hanging over them, felt anxious about the future, tossed as they were by troubled waters and grave fears.

Chapter IV

1. Vespasian's enthusiastic reception in Rome

(63) When Titus Caesar had meanwhile received the news of the eagerness with which the Italian cities greeted his father's approach, and had learned that Rome in particular had greeted him enthusiastically with much pomp, he felt great pleasure and satisfaction, for it was most agreeable to be relieved of any anxiety on his behalf. (64) Even while Vespasian was still far away, all the Italians were paying homage to him in their hearts as if he were already there. Eager anticipation made their expectation of his coming seem like his actual arrival, and their affection for him was wholly spontaneous. (65) For the Senate, remembering the disastrous consequences of the rapid succession of emperors [*a*], wanted nothing better than to have, once again, an emperor possessing the dignity of mature years and the finest record of military achievements; and his supremacy, they knew, would only ensure the welfare of his subjects. (66) The people, too, worn out by civil wars, were still more eager for his coming. They expected now, at long last, to be freed for ever from their miseries and were confident that they would again enjoy security with prosperity. (67) Above all, the army pinned their faith on him; for it appreciated more than anyone else the magnitude of the wars he had won, and, having witnessed the inexperience and cowardice of the other emperors, they were eager to be rid of that long and sordid chapter and prayed that they might receive the one man who alone could bring them salvation and add dignity to their arms. (68) Amidst such goodwill from every quarter, prominent men could not wait for his arrival but hastened to meet him before the others,

at a great distance from Rome. (69) Nor, indeed, could any of the others endure the delay in meeting him; they all felt it was simpler and easier to go than to stay behind; so they all streamed out in such crowds that the city felt for the first time the unexpected pleasure of finding itself sparsely inhabited, for those who went outnumbered those who stayed behind. (70) When he was reported to be approaching and those who had gone before were telling of his friendly encounter with every group, the rest of the population, with wives and children, lined the roadside to receive him. (71) As he passed, each group was delighted to see him, being moved by the gentleness of his appearance, and they uttered cries of every kind, hailing him "benefactor," "savior," and "the only emperor worthy of Rome." (72) The whole city, moreover, was like a temple—full of garlands and incense. Finally reaching the palace, though with difficulty, because of the throngs around him, he offered personal sacrifices to the household gods in thanksgiving for his arrival. (73) The crowds then turned to celebration and feasting by tribes [*b*], families, and neighborhoods [*c*], offering prayers and libations to God that Vespasian [*d*] himself might be spared to the Roman Empire for very many years and that the throne might be preserved unchallenged for his sons and their descendants throughout successive generations. (74) And, indeed, after this enthusiastic reception, the city of Rome quickly advanced to great prosperity [*d*].

2. Rebellions of the Germans and the Gauls

(75) Earlier, however, while Vespasian was at Alexandria and Titus was busy with the siege of Jerusalem, a large section of the Germans had been roused to revolt; (76) in sympathy with them, their neighboring Gauls conceived similar aspirations and hopes of release from the Roman yoke [*a*]. (77) The Germans were instigated to revolt and war, first by their national character, which is incapable of logical judgment, and by their readiness to rush into danger with scant hope of success [*b*], (78) and, secondly, by their hatred of their conquerors, for they knew that only the Romans had reduced them to servitude. But the present opportunity most of all inspired them with confidence. (79) They saw the Roman Empire in utter disorder through the repeated change of rulers, and they heard that every corner of the world under their rule was in a state of extreme excitement and agitation; they therefore felt that a unique opportunity was presented them by their enemy's calamitous dissensions [*b*]. (80) Their plans were abetted and hopes encouraged by two of their chiefs, Classicus and Civilis, who clearly had long been planning this rebellion. (81) They were now emboldened under the circumstances to disclose their plans and were about to test the masses who were only too eager to rebel [*c*]. (82) A large section of the Germans had already made up their minds to rebel, and the rest were not opposed,

73[*d*]–74[*d*] *Vespasian... prosperity* As became evident in the course of his reign, Vespasian eventually showed that it was possible to raise up a new Rome from the chaos of the interregnum that had prevailed since Nero's death (cf. 65[*a*] above).

76[*a*] *Roman yoke* The German leader of the Batavians who occupied the delta of the lower Rhine, Julius Civilis, was a Romanized citizen and had long served in the Roman army. Though he appeared at first to be a supporter of Vespasian against Vitellius, he opted for liberty after the defeat of the latter in October AD 69, then sought the alliance of Julius Classicus, a distinguished leader of the Treveri in Gaul who aspired to establish an *Imperium Galliarum*, though Civilis himself had nothing to do with the Gallic plan of independence.

77[*b*]–79[*b*] *Hope of success* In the light of the news of unrest in the Roman Empire, the Gallic tribes considered that the time was ripe for action, especially after the burning of the capitol in Rome, which they interpreted as an omen presaging the downfall of the Roman Empire. They did not realize that Vespasian's success would be permanent and that he would be strong enough to crush a rebellion.

81[*c*] *Eager to rebel* Though the rebels were successful at first, the leaders of the Gallic revolt had greatly overestimated the amount of support they were likely to obtain.

A dragon pennant standard carried by Sarmatian horsemen. Such standards helped to distinguish one cavalry section from another and thus prevented confusion on parade

when Vespasian, as if by divine providence, sent dispatches to Petilius Cerealius [*a*], previously commander in Germany, conferring on him consular rank and instructing him to proceed to Britain as the new governor. (83) But as he set out for his new command [*a*], he received news of the revolt of the Germans and he fell upon them just as their forces had assembled; in a pitched battle he slew masses of them, compelling them to abandon their mad scheme and learn sense [*a*]. (84) But even if Cerealius had not come to the spot so expeditiously, they were fated to suffer chastisement before long. (85) For the moment that news of their revolt reached Rome, Domitian Caesar [*b*], hearing of it, did not hesitate for a moment, as any other at his age would have done—for he was exceedingly young—to shoulder so great a burden of responsibility. (86) He had inherited the fighting spirit of his father and progressed beyond his years in training for war, so he instantly marched against the barbarians. (87) Their courage failing at the rumor of his approach, they submitted to him with great relief, thus reaping from their terror the signal advantage of again being reduced under the same yoke without suffering disaster. (88) As soon as he had put all the affairs of Gaul in order [*c*] so as to prevent any eventual disorders from easily occurring there, Domitian returned to Rome covered with glory and universally admired for exploits in one so young, but worthy of his father [*c*].

82[*a*]–83[*a*] *Petilius Cerealis* An experienced general and a near relative of Vespasian. The background story, as given by Josephus, is not represented in the same light by Tacitus (*Agr.* 8.17). He and Annius Gallus were put by Mucianus at the head of nine legions; Cerealis defeated the Treveri in Gaul and Gallus the Germans; the combined Roman legions then caused the complete collapse of the *Imperium Galliarum.*

85[*b*] *Domitian Caesar* The younger brother of Titus, aged eighteen.

88[*c*] *Put affairs of Gaul in order* There is no corroboration, in Tacitus or other sources, of Domitian's major role in the war. According to Tacitus (*Hist.* IV, 85 f.), Domitian did not distinguish himself in the campaign, but tried to induce the conquering Cerealis to plot against his father. According to Suetonius *(Domitian)*, he went to Gaul and Germany, despite his father's friends, in order to win heroic praise as his brother had done. He was slighted by the older Roman officers for unbecoming behavior. The actual victory was won when Mucianus and Domitian reached Lugdunum in Gaul and Roman domination was restored. Josephus had unduly exaggerated Domitian's share in this affair probably because of his position as a client of Domitian at the time he wrote *War*; the latter loved flattery and undeserved praise.

90[*a*] *Ister* The Danube river.

91[*b*] *Fonteius Agrippa* Tacitus in *Hist.* III, 46 identifies him as the governor of the province of Asia in AD 69. He had been recalled in 70 to take command of Moesia, a military zone in the north of the Balkans and bordering the Danube.

92[*c*] *Rubrius Gallus* A general of Nero, whose share in the war of Otho against Vitellius (and subsequent events) is described in Tacitus' *Hist.* II, 51, 99.

The pass called the Caspian gates, situated on the western shore of the Caspian Sea (near Derbent). Through this pass the invading Scythians poured into northeastern Mesopotamia

3. The Scythians' invasion of Moesia

(89) The above-mentioned revolt of the Germans coincided with a bold Scythian outbreak against the Romans. (90) A very large tribe of Scythians called the Sarmatians crossed stealthily to the opposite bank of the Ister [*a*] and fell upon the Romans so violently and entirely unexpectedly that resistance was swept aside; large numbers of the Roman guards were slain, (91) among them the consular legate Fonteius Agrippa [*b*], who had advanced to meet them and died fighting valiantly; they then overran all the countryside to the south, devastating and plundering whatever fell in their way. (92) When news of what had happened and of the ravaging of Moesia reached Vespasian, he sent out Rubrius Gallus [*c*] to punish the Sarmatians [*d*]. (93) Multitudes of them were slain by him in the ensuing battles, and the panic-stricken survivors fled back to their own country. (94) When the general brought the war to this conclusion, he provided future security by stationing more numerous and stronger garrisons throughout the area, so as to deny the barbarians the least chance of getting across again [*e*]. (95) The Moesian war was thus quickly settled.

Chapter V

1. Titus' visit to the "Sabbatical" river

(96) Titus Caesar spent some time in Berytus [*a*], as stated before. From there he passed through a number of Syrian towns, exhibiting in each lavish spectacles in which Jewish prisoners were forced to make a show of their own destruction. As he advanced, he saw a river whose nature merits description. (97) It runs between Arcea [*b*], a town in Agrippa's dominion [*c*], and Raphanaeae [*d*], and it has a remarkable peculiarity. (98) When it is in flow, it fills its channel and its current is torrential; then suddenly its sources fail completely, and for six days the riverbed is dry; then again, just as if no change had happened, the water gushes out on the seventh day just as before. (99) And it has always been observed to keep strictly to this timetable, so it was called the Sabbatical river [*a*], named after the sacred seventh day of the Jews.

2. Titus' rejection of the Antiochenes' petition to expel the Jews; rejection of his visit to Jerusalem

(100) When the citizens of Antioch learned that Titus was near, they were far too delighted to stay within their walls, and rushed out to meet him, (101) proceeding over thirty furlongs [*b*], not only men but crowds of women and children as well, pouring out of the city. (102) And when they saw him approaching, they lined both sides of the road and greeted him with extended arms and, calling down every kind of blessing on him, they escorted him in his train; (103) but all their acclamations were mingled with constant appeal

92[*d*] *Sarmatians* They were, "as Josephus states, the Alani... the latest wave of the barbarian flood that had been moving westward from central Asia, and at this time they were settled in the steppes between the Caucasus and the Caspian" (CAH X, pp. 777–780).

94[*e*] "When the migratory movement was stemmed on the west by Plautius Silvanus, it threatened to seek an outlet towards the south, and an overflow in this direction took place within a few years, when the floodgates on the Danube, temporarily opened by the denudation of the frontier during the civil war, were closed again by a strengthened defense" (CAH X, 778).

96[*a*] *Berytus* Beirut. Cf. 39[*c*].

97[*b*] *Arcea* or Arca, northeast of Tripolis and north of the Lebanon.

97[*c*] *Agrippa's domain, and his history* The history of this Jewish monarch, last of the Herodian kings and a friend of Josephus, clarifies the attitude of contemporary pacifist Jews to Roman rule. Agrippa II, son of Agrippa I, was appointed by Rome as king of Chalcis (*War* II, 223), then of Trachonitis, Batanaea and Gaulanitis (*ibid.*, 247). His kingdom was enlarged by Nero (252), and we learn that he changed the name of the capital of his kingdom, Caesarea Philippi (modern Baneas) to Neronias in honor of the emperor (*Antiq.* XX, 211). The First Revolt put him in an extremely difficult position. He and his sister Bernice (*War* II, 217, 220, 310–312 ff., 333, 344, 415) tried their best to calm the people of Jerusalem (II, 345–401), but all his efforts, including the dispatch of troops to the city, were in vain (*ibid.*, 406, 418, 421). He then sent forces to help general Cestius Gallus to recapture Jerusalem from the rebels (481). The rebels' victory over Gallus hastened the revolt of Agrippa's own subjects in Tiberias, Tarichaeae, Gaulanitis and Gamla. The picture changed with the arrival of Vespasian, when Agrippa II actively assisted the Romans and helped them to subdue Tiberias. He also took part in the siege of Gamla, in which he was wounded (*War* IV, 14). Tacitus (*Hist.* II, 81) relates that both he and Bernice later enthusiastically supported Vespasian and the Flavians in their campaign for control of the empire. After the final victory of the Romans in Palestine, the boundaries of Agrippa's kingdom were extended northwards beyond the Lebanon to include Arca, northeast of Tripolis. This was consonant with the imperial policy of establishing protectorates on the fringe of imperial domains, even at the expense of other Syrian territory. It is also assumed that the liaison developed between Titus and princess Bernice assisted the consolidation of Agrippa's position, but in the end Titus sent her away in view of hostile public opinion. Agrippa reigned through Titus' and most of Domitian's rule (AD 96), but he was no longer king when Domitian died, and his territories were annexed directly to the Roman Empire. This ended the role the Herodian family had fulfilled in contemporary Jewish history.

97[*d*] *Raphanaeae* Cf. VII, 18.

99[*a*] *Sabbatical river* A mythical river that dried up on the Sabbath and beyond which the "lost ten tribes" were supposed to have been transported. Josephus knew also of the mythical watercourse whose waters ran dry for six days at a time and flowed only on the Sabbath, and this represents the Talmudic view as well. Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* XXXI, 11), who came closer to the Talmudic view, was of the opinion that it was situated in Judaea. Jewish legend claimed that it was a wadi that ejected stones when flowing and, when dry, remained brimful of stones. The historical basis of the legend may be a river in Syria called by a name similar to the word in question, Sambation, or possibly Neba'-el-Fuar or another wadi that drains water intermittently.

101[*b*] *Thirty furlongs* Approximately 6.5 kms.

to expel the Jews from the city. (104) Titus listened in silence to the appeal without acceding to it; but the Jews, uncertain as to his thoughts and intentions, were kept in great fear and alarm. (105) For Titus did not stay at Antioch but marched on immediately to Zeugma [*c*] on the Euphrates, where a deputation from the Parthian king Bologeses met him and brought him a golden wreath in honor of the victory over the Jews. (106) After accepting this and feasting the king's messengers, he returned to Antioch. (107) When the senate and people of that city earnestly invited him to visit the theater, where the whole population was crowded to receive him, he agreed graciously. (108) But when once more they persistently implored him to expel the Jews from the city, he replied sagaciously: (109) "But their own country to which they, as Jews; ought to be banished has been destroyed, and no other place would admit them now." (110) So the Antiochenes turned to a second appeal, relinquishing the first: they asked him to remove the bronze tablets engraved with the Jews' privileges [*a*]. (111) But Titus refused this also and, leaving the status of the Jews of Antioch [*b*] as it was, he left for Egypt. (112) On the way he visited Jerusalem, and, contrasting the grievous desolation that met his eye with the splendor of the city that was and calling to mind the grandeur and beauty of its ruined buildings, he commiserated over the city's destruction. (113) He did not boast, as anyone else might have done, of having taken it by storm, though it was so mighty and vast, but heaped curses on the criminal instigators of the revolt who brought this chastisement on it [*c*]; so plainly did he show that he would have never wished the horrible punishment that had been inflicted to serve as proof of his prowess. (114) Of the city's great wealth no small portion was still being discovered in the ruins. (115) The Romans dug up much of this, but the greater part came into their hands as a result of information provided by the captive prisoners: gold and silver and other most precious articles that the owners had stored underground, in view of the unpredictable chances of war.

3. Titus' journey to Egypt and Rome

(116) Resuming his projected march to Egypt, Titus crossed the desert with all possible speed and arrived at Alexandria. (117) He decided to sail for Italy, and sent two legions that had accompanied him back to their old stations, the fifth to Moesia, the fifteenth to Pannonia [*d*]. (118) Of the prisoners, he ordered the leaders Simon and John, along with seven hundred of the rank and file, picked out for their remarkable stature and physique, to be conveyed immediately to Italy, intending to display them at his triumph. (119) After a voyage that went according to plan, Rome gave him as warm a welcome as it had given to his father [*a*], but it was the more glorious because his father himself came to welcome him. (120) The throng

105[*c*] *Zeugma* In the region of Samosata on the right bank of the river Euphrates. Its name is derived from its bridge of boats spanning the river.

110[*a*] *The Jews' privileges* The removal of the bronze tablets meant rescinding the Jews' former privileges. Evidently, the citizens of Antioch suggested using the Jewish rebellion as an excuse for rescinding historical Jewish privileges, even if they failed in their former attempt to blame the Jews for the fire and the sequel to Antiochus' instigations. But neither Vespasian nor Titus endeavored to curtail local Jewish rights, which were also respected throughout the empire. There was nothing in the legislation at the time that in any way altered the rights of any Jews to enjoy whatever type of citizenship they had inherited. Even if they were unfriendly to the Jews, the emperors consistently refused to clarify the highly complicated Jewish status. They evidently were determined to leave matters in the Diaspora as they had been during the prewar period.

111[*b*] *Status of the Jews of Antioch,* namely their legal status. It will be recalled (*War* III, 479) that other Syrian towns, Apamea and Sidon, which had Jewish communities, were untouched by the major anti-Jewish riots that broke out in the cities of Syria and Phoenicia at the beginning of the Great Revolt (AD 66). However, thousands of Jews were killed in Damascus (II, 559–561).

113[*c*] *This chastisement* Josephus transposes his own interpretation and feelings onto Titus.

117[*d*] *Pannonia* The legion was sent there by boats to avoid the tedious overland journey.

119[*a*] *His father* Cf. VII, 63–74. Titus arrived in Rome around mid-June of 71.

120[*b*] *Three princes* Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian.

121[*c*] *A single joint triumph in honor* Tacitus (in *Hist.* II, 4; V, 1) described the Judaean campaign as a major event in Rome's military history, thus paying unwitting homage to the despised Jews. Josephus, on his part, feared no public ridicule when he addressed his book *The Jewish War* to the Greco-Roman public and ventured to speak of the "greatest [conflict] not only of the wars of our own time, but, so far as accounts have reached us, well nigh of all that ever broke out between cities and nations" (*War* I, 1; Preamble).

123[*a*] *Upper palace* On the Palatine hill. *Temple of Isis* Some Romans — at court, in the army, and slaves — worshiped the Egyptian goddess Isis and revered her magic.

123[*b*] *Emperors* Namely, the victorious generals.

124[*c*] *Octavian walks* West of the capitol, near the Theater of Marcellus. Its portico enclosed two shrines and other buildings, which were burned a few years later.

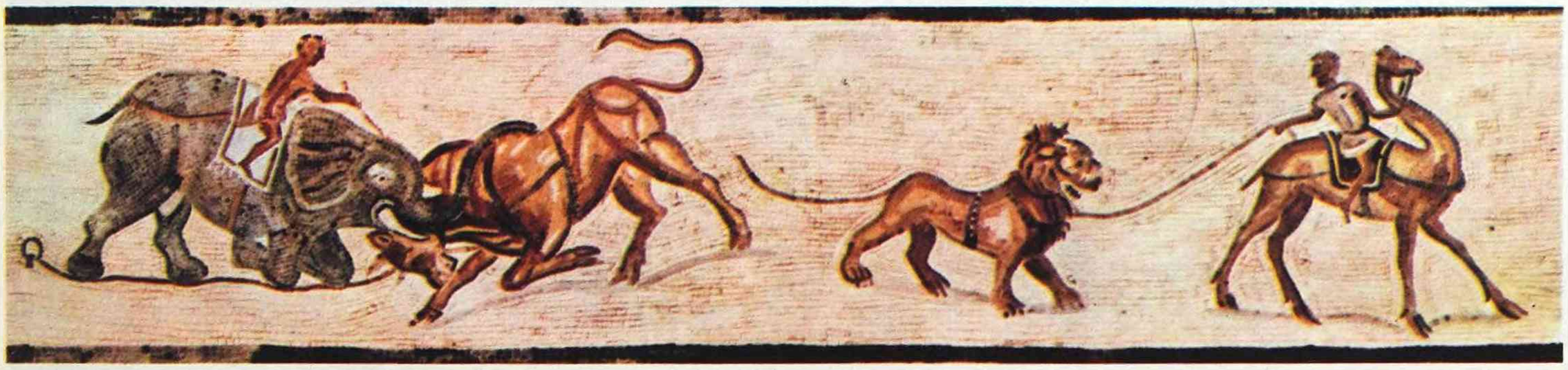
125[*d*] *Equestrian rank* The Roman middle class.

130[*a*] This is the *Porta triumphalis* situated between the Capitol and the river Tiber. Triumphal processions usually passed from there to the Circus Maximus and the Forum, ending at the Temple of Jupiter Capitoline. The present procession seems to have made detours through three theaters for the benefit of the immense crowds of spectators.

Laureate head of Titus on gold coin with legend: IMP(erator) TITUS CAES(ar) VESPASIANUS P(ontifex) (Maximus)

Caesarea Philippi, where Titus exhibited his "spectacles" and games in the arena in honor of his victory. It was situated near the Hellenistic temple of the god Pan, the beautiful site from which one of the springs of the Jordan gushes forth

The gladiatorial combats in the arena lasted from dawn to twilight. Mortal duels between wild animals were featured in the morning, followed by a duel between wild beasts and men who were armed only with nets, torches, lances, or daggers. This was only the hors-d'oeuvre. As the crowd hungered for more human combat, they were offered the horrendous hoplomachie *fought between gladiators; bets were placed, the game organizers gouging the combatants while thousands of spectators on the benches screamed: "Kill, kill" until one of the combatants fell once, twice, then once more, never to rise again. Condemned criminals, even Christians and Jews, were thrown to the beasts until the arena's basements were emptied of animals and humans, whose death alone could satisfy the bloodthirsty spectators*



Aerial view of the northern palace on Masada.
The desert plain below is shown in the foreground

of citizens could not contain their joy when they saw all the three princes united [*b*]. (121) Not many days later they decided to celebrate a single joint triumph in honor [*c*] of their exploits, though the senate had decreed a separate triumph for each. (122) As notice was given in advance of the day appointed for the victory pageant, not one person stayed at home out of all the immense population of the city; all came out, standing wherever they could, leaving barely enough room for those they had come to gaze upon to pass.

4. The morning of the triumphal march

(123) While it was still night, all the soldiers marched out under their commanders, in companies and divisions, and had formed up not around the doors of the upper palace [*a*] but near the temple of Isis [*a*]; for there the emperors [*b*] had slept that night. (124) At daybreak Vespasian and Titus came out, wreathed with laurel and wearing the traditional purple robes, and proceeded to the Octavian walks [*c*]; (125) for there the senate, the senior magistrates, and those of equestrian rank [*d*] were awaiting their arrival. (126) A dais had been set up in front of the porticoes and chairs of ivory placed for them, and on these they proceeded to sit; acclamations rose instantly from the troops, one and all bearing ample testimony to their prowess; the princes were unarmed, dressed in silk robes and crowned with laurel. (127) Vespasian, after acknowledging their acclamation, which they still wished to continue, gave the signal for silence. (128) He then rose amid a complete hush and, covering most of his head in his mantle, recited the customary prayers, Titus also doing the same. (129) After prayers, Vespasian delivered a short speech to the whole gathering, dismissed the soldiers to partake in the breakfast provided for them by the emperors, (130) and himself withdrew to the gate that took its name from the triumphal processions [*a*] always passing through it. (131) There the princes first tasted food, put on the triumphal robes, sacrificed to the gods whose statues stood on either side of the gate, and then sent the pageant on its way, driving through the theaters to give the crowds a better view.

5. (132) It is impossible to give a satisfactory account of the innumerable spectacles, of their magnificence in every conceivable way—whether in works of art, variety of wealth, or unusual nature. (133) Almost all the treasures that have ever come, one by one, into the hands of men blessed by fortune—the priceless productions of many nations—were brought together that day, displaying the majesty of the Roman Empire. (134) Masses of silver, gold, and ivory, wrought in every conceivable shape, not as if carried in procession, but, so to speak, like a flowing river; there were tapestries borne along, some in the rarest shades of purple, some embroidered by Babylonian artists with accurate pictures; (135) transparent gems, some set in golden crowns, some in other fashions, carried past in

Vespasian's portrait on a denarius *with legend DIVUS AUGUSTUS VESPASIANUS (Divine Augustus Vespasian)*

A charioteer at the games in the arena (Vatican Museum)

such profusion as to correct a presumption that any of them were such rarities. (136) Images of their gods [*a*] were carried aloft, marvellous in size and of the finest craftsmanship, every one of them made from rich material. Beasts of many kinds were led past, all caparisoned with the proper trappings. (137) The numerous attendants conducting each group of animals were arrayed in garments of genuine purple dye, interwoven with gold, while those chosen to take part in the pageant itself had the richest and most amazing ornaments about them. (138) Furthermore, even the mob of captives did not go unadorned, while the variety and beauty of their garments hid from view any disfigurements [*b*] due to their physical sufferings.

The movable pictorial stages

(139) But what proved to be the greatest wonder was the structure of the movable stages [*a*]; indeed their immense size caused alarm and misgiving as to their stability, (140) since many were three or four stories high, while the magnificence of their fabric was viewed with delighted surprise. (141) For many were hung with tapestries interwoven with gold, and all were framed with gold and wrought ivory. (142) The war and its successive stages were vividly portrayed by many representations. (143) Here was to be seen a prospering countryside laid waste, there whole battalions of the enemy put to the sword; here a party of men in flight, and there others led off to captivity; walls of enormous size were demolished by engines, great strongholds overpowered, cities whose battlements were well-manned with defenders utterly overwhelmed and an army streaming within the ramparts, the whole area deluged with blood. (144) Those unable to resist raised their hands in supplication; temples were set on fire and houses torn down over the heads of their occupants; (145) and, after utter desolation and misery, rivers were flowing, not over tilled soil nor supplying drink to men and beasts, but across a countryside still devoured by flames on every side; for such were the agonies to which the Jews had condemned themselves when they plunged into the war. (146) The art and the marvelous workmanship of these constructions now revealed the events to those who had not seen them happen, as clearly as if they had been there. (147) On each of the stages, the commander of one of the captured cities was stationed in the attitude in which he was taken.

The spoils of the Temple

(148) Many ships [*b*] also followed. Most of the spoils were heaped up indiscriminately; but more prominent than all the rest were those captured in the Temple at Jerusalem. They consisted of a golden table weighing many talents [*c*], and a candelabrum [*d*] also made of gold, but different in pattern from those we use in ordinary life. (149) Its central shaft was fixed to a base, and from it extended slender branches arranged like

136[*a*] *Their gods* Those of the Romans or other pagans, for whom the Greek version was intended.

138[*b*] *Disfigurements* Many of the prisoners had been maimed in the war.

139[*a*] *Movable stages* Termed *pagina* in low Latin, from which the English *pageant* is derived, defining an elaborate show.

148[*b*] *Ships* This commemorated the naval engagement on the Sea of Galilee; cf. *War* III, 522 ff.; 531.

148[*c*] *Talents* Units that equalled 3000 shekels in weight in Syria and Palestine.

148[*d*] *Candelabrum* As explained in note 149[*c*], the depiction on the Arch of Titus does not truly represent the historic *menorah* of the Temple as placed there by Herod. The graffito of a seven-branched menorah has been excavated in the present Jewish quarter above the Temple Mount in a house, as illustrated. It was incised on unpainted plaster. Its *triangular base* and short stem (taller than in ancient depictions) are most noteworthy. All the elements there, including the base, are ornamented with a motif of knobs separated by two parallel lines—a schematic astragal molding pattern. This was incised in the plaster as a *contemporary* symbolic element at a time when the *original object* in the Temple was located some hundreds of meters away. In any case, even if the candelabrum of this time rested on a solid pyramidal base as on the Arch of Titus and not on a triangular base as in the Jerusalem graffito, one of the reasons for questioning its authenticity is that its base depicts human and allegorical animal forms in apparent violation of the second commandment. Since the carvings on the Arch of Titus were made by non-Jewish artisans, it is more likely that it represents a schematization of the basic designs familiar from other graffiti, coins, or carvings found in Palestine.

149[*e*] *Sanctity of that number to the Jews,* or perhaps "the honor paid to the week by the Jews." Both possible translations indicate the holiness of the symbol. Moreover, in *Antiquities* III, 183, Josephus comments that "by providing the candelabrum... with seven lamps thereon, Moses hinted at the course of the planets themselves, for such is their number" (Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, plus the sun and moon, as understood by ancient astronomers).

149[*e*] *Concerning the Arch of Titus* The carvings inside the arch depict the chariot of the victor followed by men carrying the golden seven-branched candelabrum, the table of shewbread, sacred incense cups, and trumpets, as borne in the procession. It is indeed one of the most evocative and moving records of Roman art. It still stands as a solitary monument in the green and faded gold of the Roman Forum. But it was not erected *divo Tito* until after his death. The actions depicted Peace *(Pax),* which he had rebuilt (cf. 158–162 below) but which was later burned under Commodus (*Herodian* I, 14, 2). It is not known what happened to them afterwards. It is worth comparing this with another classic comment: "But the [incense] cups of the [priestly] House of Abtinas... and the menorah are still in Rome" (*Aboth de Rabbi Nathan* 41, 12). The candelabrum was removed to Byzantium via Carthage and was kept there for close to a millennium in the palace of the emperors. "It appears, according to I. Levi, that it disappeared around 1204, during the sack of the imperial palace and in the course of its capture during the Fourth Crusade" (*Encyclopedia Biblica,* Hebrew, Vol. V., p. 20). According to another version, it was apparently taken to Carthage (for in the sack of Rome Gaiseric took, among other things, sacred objects) and from there transferred to Constantinople (Byzantium) by Belisarius when he destroyed the Vandal empire in AD 534. Another theory suggests that the historic menorah was pulverized and then thrown into the Tiber by the Vandals. Jerusalem's fame is echoed in Rome by this inscription. It seems to describe it as a city which had never been captured before. Indeed, a halo of legend surrounded Jerusalem not only for the Jews but also for the Gentiles, as echoed by Suetonius in his *Life of Nero,* 492.

150[*a*] *Copy of the Jewish Law* In the Temple there was a Bible called the "Book of the Court," on the basis of which Bible scrolls were corrected (*Mishna Moed Katan* 3, 4; *Pal. Talmud Sanhedrin* II, 200). It was read on festal occasions and was among the booty that Titus took to Rome (when he dashed into the burning Temple he may have carried this as well as other "books"). Cf. 162[*b*] below.

Roman stage and play

Scene depicting the cult of Jupiter Dolicheno. Bas-relief in the Antiquarium, Rome

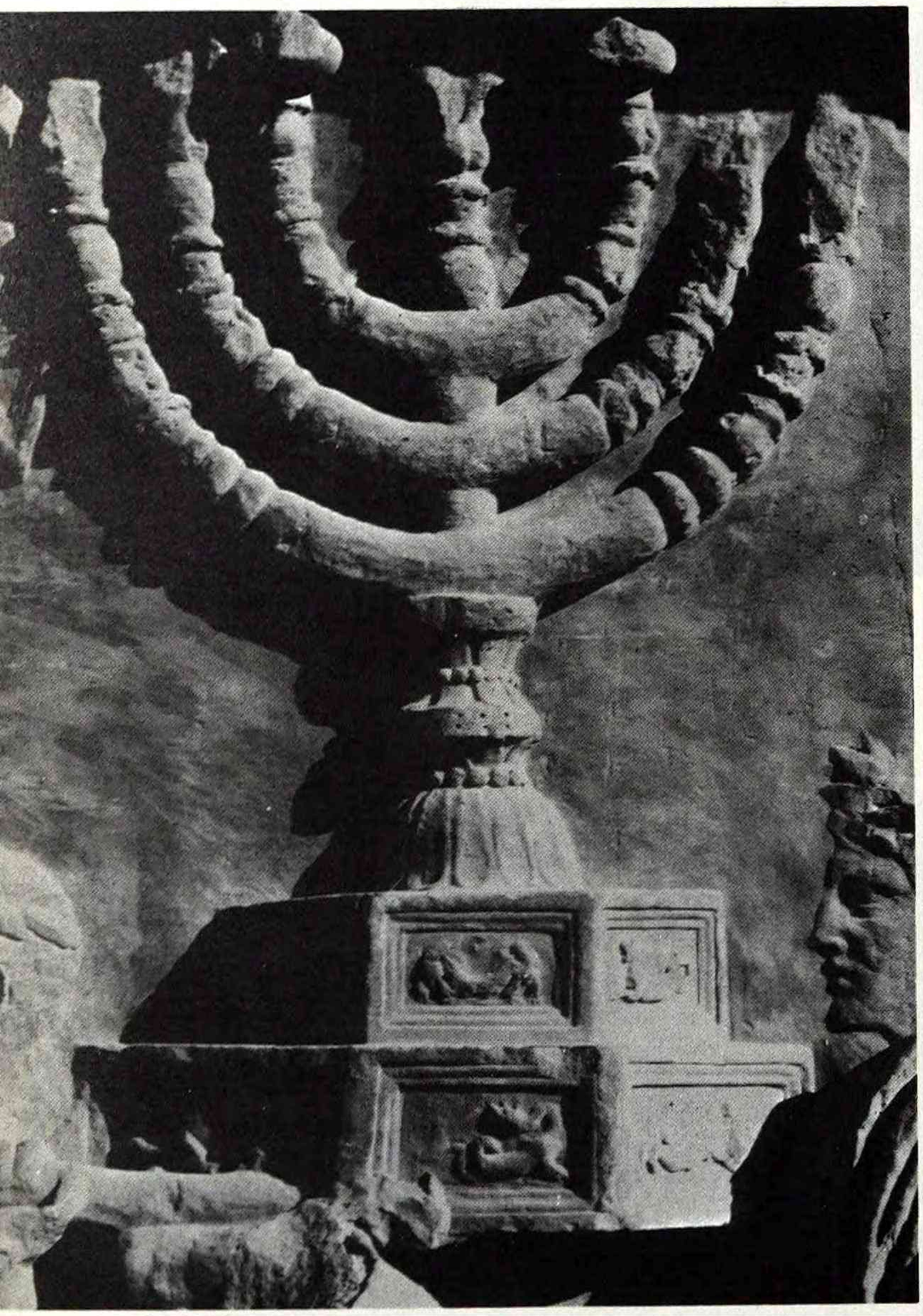
153[b] *Jupiter Capitoline* The temple of Jupiter on the capitol (*War* IV, 485, 645–647).

154[c] *Spot* For executions at the Mamertine prison adjoining the Forum.

158[a] *Temple of Peace* Dedicated in AD 75 (in the sixth year of Vespasian's reign) to the goddess of Peace (Dio Cassius lxvi, 15 *Hist. of Rome*). The date proves that Josephus did not compose the Greek version of *War* before this time. The version was made with the help of assistants between AD 75 and 79, when Vespasian died (Josephus, *Contra Apion* I (9) 50).

162[b] *Book* (or scroll) *of the Law* Referred to in note 150[a] above. It was deposited in care of Severo Alessandro Archisynagogus (*Athenaeum* XXII, 193, p. 15 ff.). Josephus states that he received "by Titus' gracious favor" a gift of sacred books (*Life*, 418).

The Temple's candelabrum in Titus' Arch of Triumph is not identical to the genuine object, as explained in commentary 148[b]–149[c]



the prongs of a trident, while a wrought lamp was attached to the end of each branch; these numbered seven, indicating the sanctity of that number to the Jews [*e*]. (150) After these—and last of all the spoils—was carried a copy of the Jewish Law [*a*]. (151) Then followed a large group carrying images of Victory, all fashioned of ivory and gold. (152) Behind them Vespasian drove first, with Titus behind him, while Domitian rode alongside in magnificent apparel and mounted on a horse that was itself a site worth seeing.

6. The execution of Simon-bar-Giora

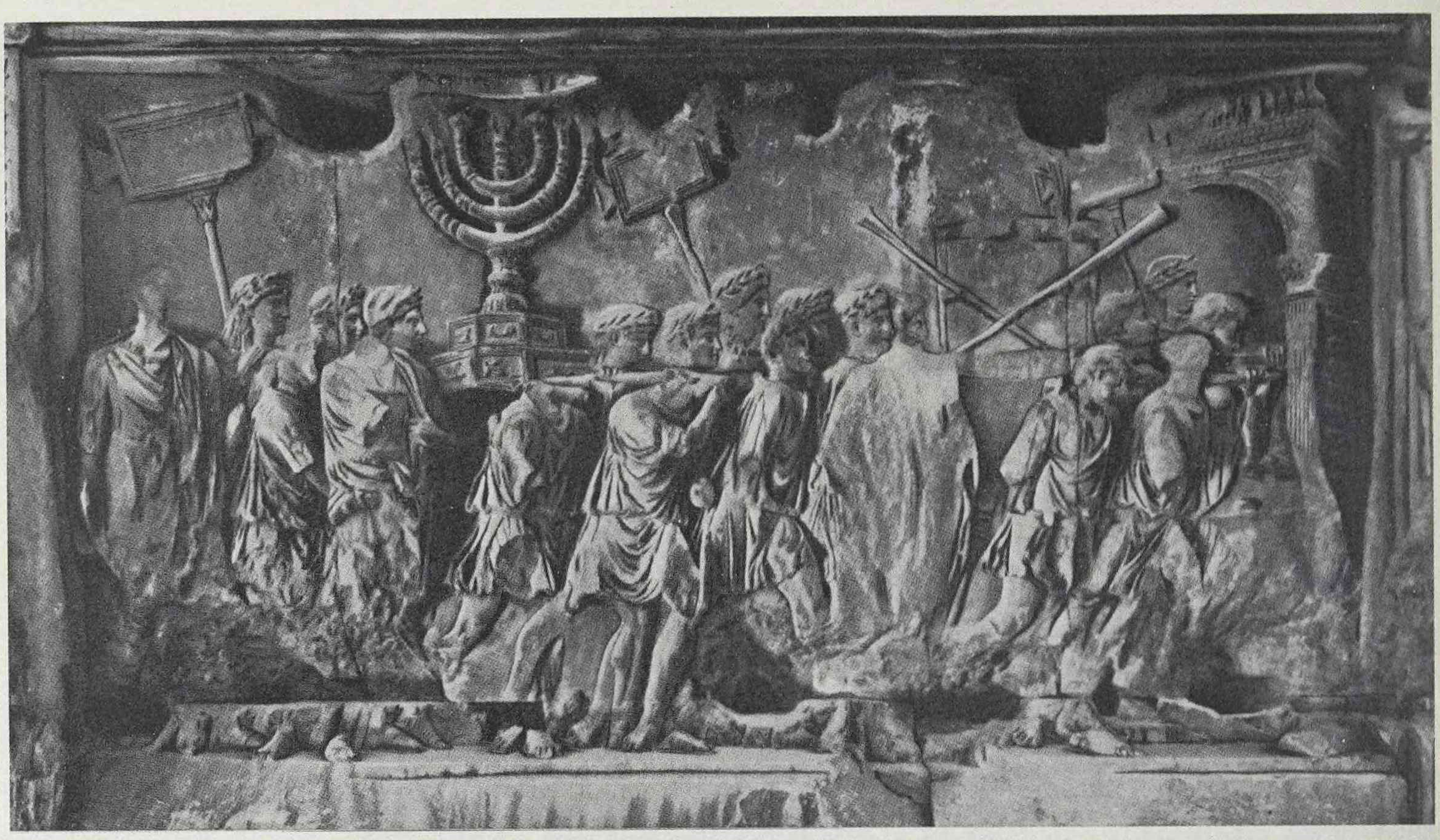
(153) The triumphal procession concluded at the temple of Jupiter Capitoline [*b*] where it came to a halt; for it was an ancient custom to wait there till the execution of the enemy's commander was announced. (154) This was Simon, son of Gioras, who had just been marching in the procession among the prisoners, and now, with a halter thrown around him and while his escort scourged him, he was being dragged to the spot [*c*] abutting on the Forum, where, according to Roman custom, malefactors condemned to death are executed. (155) When the announcement of Simon's end was received with universal acclamation, the princes began the sacrifices, proceeded with the customary prayers and withdrew to the palace. (156) Some of the spectators they entertained at a feast at the imperial table; for all the rest handsome provision had been prepared for banquets in their homes. (157) The city of Rome celebrated that day the victory of the campaign against her enemies, the termination of civil strife, and the dawning hope for a joyous future.

7. The erection of the *Templum Pacis*

(158) When the triumphal ceremonies were concluded and the Roman Empire established on the firmest foundations, Vespasian decided to build a temple of Peace [*a*], which was finished in a short time, and surpassed all human conceptions in style. (159) For he had unlimited wealth at his disposal and he adorned it with famous old paintings and sculptures. (160) In fact, in that temple were collected and stored all those works that before this men had traveled over the whole world to see, eager to view them individually while they lay in different lands. (161) There, too, he laid up the golden vessels of the Temple of the Jews, for he prided himself on them. (162) But their Law [*b*] and the purple hangings of the sanctuary he ordered deposited in the palace for safekeeping.

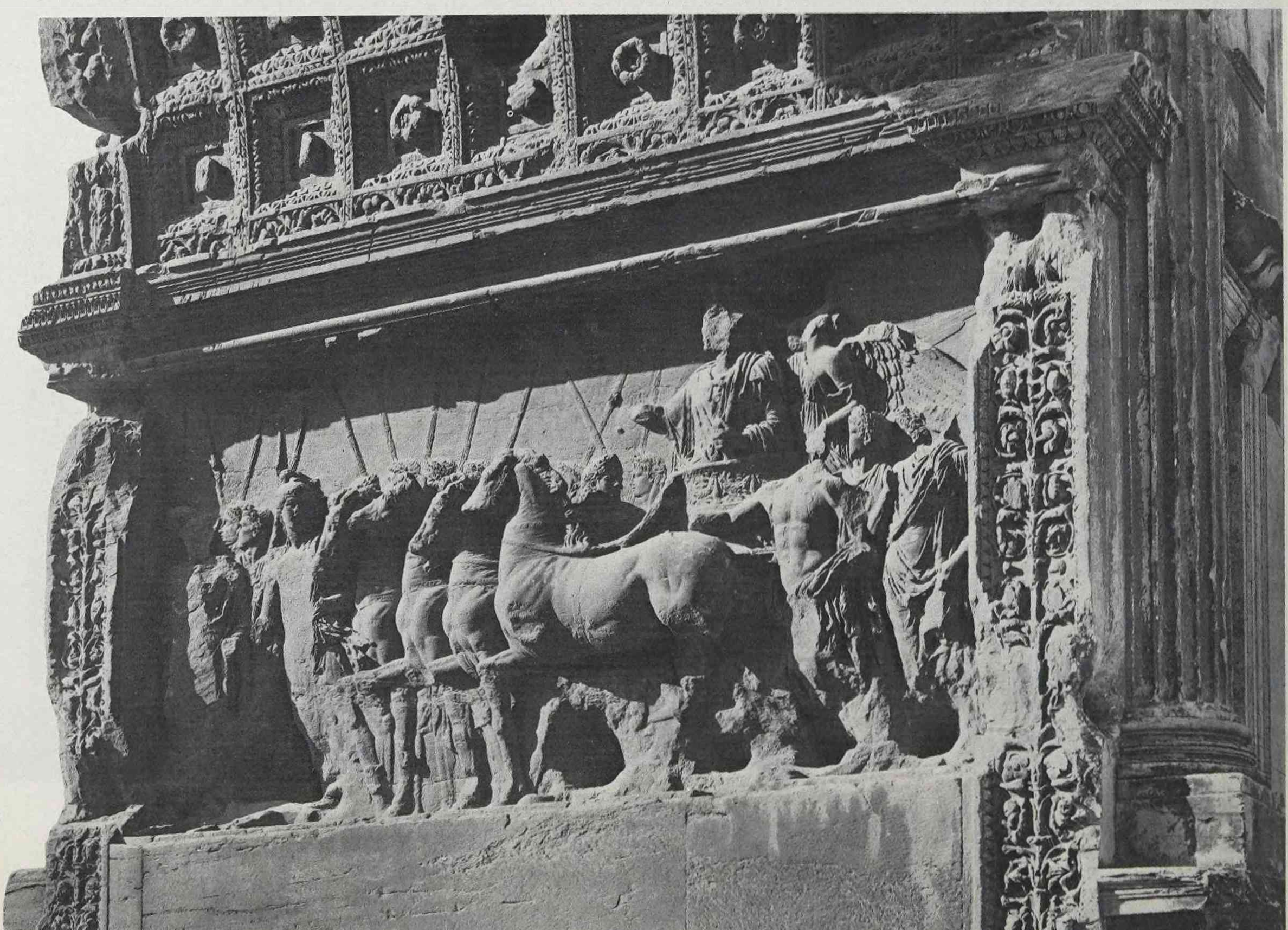
Right: Frontal view of Titus' Arch of Triumph on the Forum Romanum, described above

SENATVS
POPVLVSQVE ROMANVS
DIVOTITODIVTVESPASIANIIF
VESPASIANOAVGVSTO



The relief of the triumphal procession in Titus' Arch of Triumph on the Forum Romanum features the precious objects the Romans took away from the Temple. Jewish prisoners are seen on the right

Detail of the bas relief in the triumphal procession (151–152)



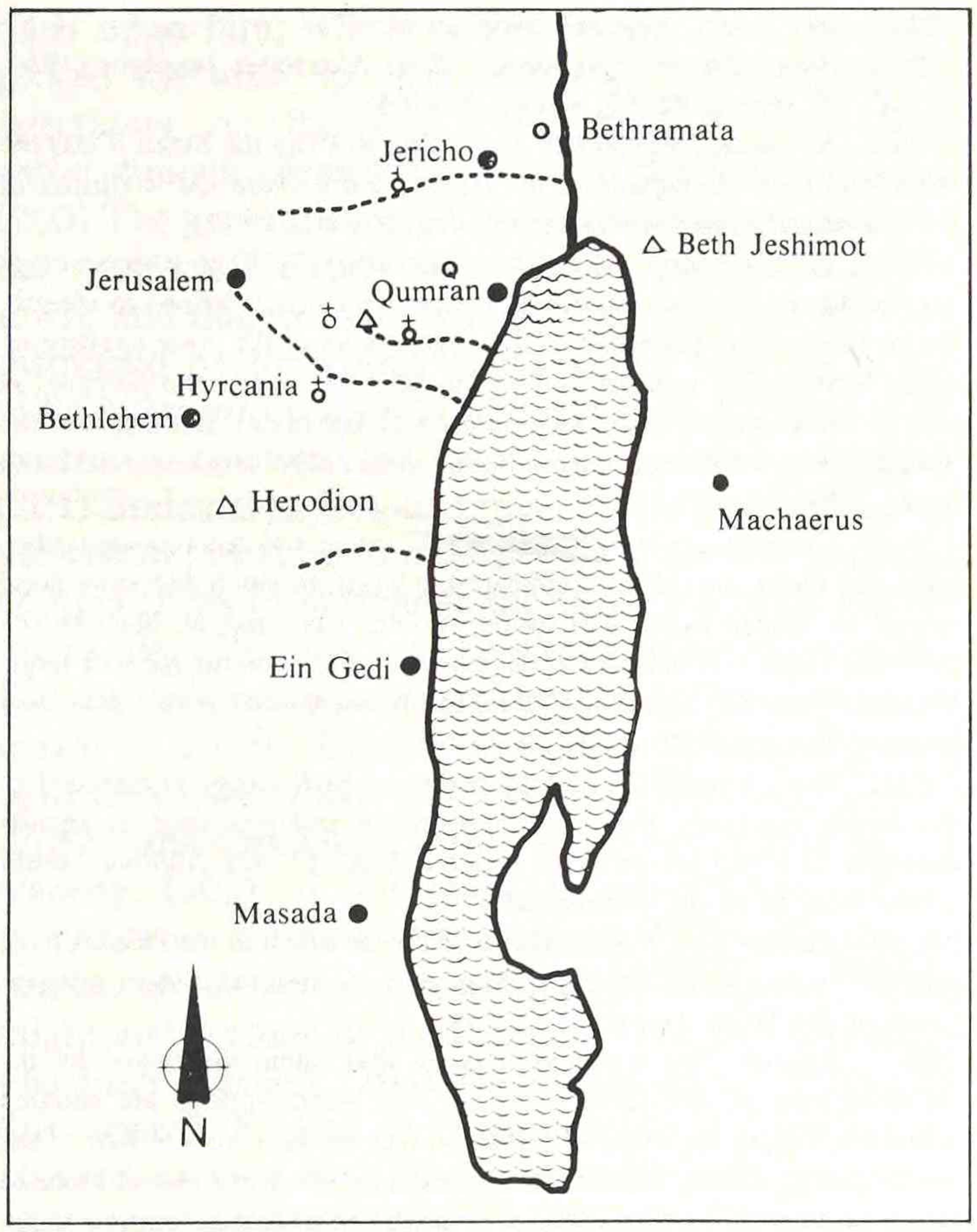
B. LAST RESISTANCE SUBDUED; HARSH FISCAL MEASURES

Chapter VI

1. Lucilius Bassus' march on Machaerus

(163) A new legate had been sent to Judaea, Lucilius Bassus [*a*], who took over the command from Cerealius Vetilianus [*b*]; he first captured the fortress of Herodium [*c*] with its defenders; (164) then concentrating all his numerous troops, including the tenth legion—for they were scattered all over the province—he determined to march against Machaerus [*d*]. It was absolutely necessary to capture this fortress for fear that its strength should induce large numbers to revolt, (165) since the character of the place might well embolden its occupants with high hopes of security and cause fear and alarm among those attacking it. (166) The defended site is in itself a rocky hill rising to such a great height as to make it hard to subdue for that very reason; moreover, nature had further contrived to make it unapproachable. (167) For it is intrenched on every side with ravines that are of a depth not easy to perceive, most difficult to cross, and quite impossible to bank up. (168) The valley that shuts it on the west extends to sixty furlongs [*a*] and ends at the Lake Asphaltitis [*b*]; and somewhere in that region Machaerus itself towers aloft at its apex. (169) The ravines to the north and south, though considerably smaller, are just as im-

Site of Machaerus and view of the early excavations conducted there since 1978



The Dead Sea region

163[*a*] *Lucilius Bassus* The governor of Judaea after the destruction of Jerusalem. Like Vespasian, he was of senatorial rank. The fortresses of Herodion, Machaerus, and Masada still remained in Jewish hands, and he inherited the task of reducing them.

163[*b*] *Cerealius Vetilianus* He had been the legate of the fifth legion (*War* III, 319; IV, 522–524; VI, 131) and was left in command of the tenth legion Fretensis which garrisoned Jerusalem.

163[*c*] *Herodium* (Herodion in Hebrew). Bassus seems to have captured it without undue difficulty. This Herodian fortified palace, situated some 4.5 km east of Bethlehem, had been the king's palatial retreat and his burial-place (though no trace of his tomb has been found to date nor any sarcophagus; cf. *War* I, 419 ff.; II, 673; III, 55; IV, 518, 555). The important finds from the time of the revolt include large rolling stones, ballista stones, arrowheads, and some scores of coins of the first revolt. The written material comprises graffiti scratched by later dwellers on the coating of the palace and on the bath walls, and a Hebrew osctracon that mentioned Herod.

164[*d*] *Machaerus,* now the Arab village of al-Mukawer in Transjordan and the fortress ruins called Kasr-el-Meshnekeh about sixty km southwest of Amman and some 9 km northeast of the Dead Sea. Gabinius demolished the fortress (*War* I, 167) and Herod fortified it. It was situated in the borderland between the territory of Peraea, governed in former years by Herod Antipas, and the area ruled by the Nabateans. This was the fortress in which Antipas' wife took refuge when she fled to her father, the Nabatean King Aretas IV, after she learned of her husband's betrayal (*Antiq.* XVIII, V, 1); and this was, according to Josephus, the palace-fortress where John the Baptist was beheaded by order of Herod Antipas (this is not correct, according to D. Flusser; he was apparently killed in the king's palace of Tiberias as defined in a forthcoming book edited by G. Cornfeld: *New Light on the Historical Jesus,* 1982). Machaerus was held by a Roman garrison until AD 66, then abandoned for fear of being besieged by Jewish rebels who held it until AD 72, the year of its final siege. See further details in notes 174[*c*], [*d*]; 176[*d*].

168[*a*] Sixty furlongs; approximately 11,3 km.

168[*b*] *Lake Asphaltitis* The Dead Sea, described in *War* III, 476–482.

practicable to an attacker. (170) The valley that lies on the east is found to be at least a hundred cubits in depth [*c*] and it extends as far as a mountain that faces Machaerus.

2. History of Machaerus

(171) Alexander [*a*], king of the Jews, realizing that the site had many natural advantages, was the first to build a fortress there; it was subsequently demolished by Gabinius in his war with Aristobulus. (172) But when Herod came to the throne, he decided that no place would deserve better attention as the strongest fortification [*b*], especially in view of its proximity to Arabia [*b*], which made its situation most opportune as it faced this country. (173) He therefore surrounded a large area with walls and towers and established a city there, from which an ascent led up to the ridge top itself. (174) Furthermore, he built a wall round the summit, erecting towers at the corners, each sixty cubits high [*c*]. (175) In the middle of the enclosure he built a palace with magnificently beautiful and spacious apartments; (176) and at carefully chosen spots he constructed many cisterns [*d*] to collect rainwater and maintain a constant supply, as though he were competing with nature and hoping by means of those artificial defenses to outdo the natural impregnability of the place. (177) He further stocked it with an ample supply of weapons and engines, and planned it all so as to furnish the occupants with everything needed to withstand the longest siege.

3. The phenomenal trees and hot springs

(178) Within the palace grounds, a plant of a rue [*a*] grew to an astonishing size—every bit as tall and thick as a fig-tree. (179) It has been said that it stood there since Herod's time, and it might have continued to live for a very long time had it not been cut down by Jews who settled in the place. (180) In the ravine [*b*] which borders the town on the north is a place called Baaras [*c*] and a root of the same name grows there as well. (181) It is flame-colored and it sends out brilliant flashes at dusk while it eludes the grasp of people who try to pluck it, for the root shrinks up and will not stay still unless a woman's urine or menstrual blood are poured over it [*d*]. (182) But even then touching it entails certain death, unless one carries off the root, dangling from the hand. (183) But there is another way of capturing it without risk, namely to dig around it, leaving only the smallest piece of root in the ground, (184) then tie a dog to it, and when the animal springs forward to follow the person who tied him, it will easily be pulled out; but the dog will die on the spot, as though it sacrificed its life for the man who intended to remove the plant, for after this no danger remains in handling it [*d*]. (185) Despite the attendant risks, it has one virtue for which it is prized, for the so-called demons—in fact, the spirits of evildoers that enter the living and kill them unless they are rescued—are quickly cast out by this root if it merely

170[*c*] *100 cubits* Approximately 50 m.

171[*a*] *Alexander the Hasmonean* King Alexander Jannaeus (104–78 BC; cf. *War* I, 86–87; 91–98, 99–105).

172[*b*] *Strongest fortification* According to Pliny the Elder, it was the most important stronghold in the region, and it faced the territories of the Nabataeans with whom Herod was at war.

174[*c*] *Towers... sixty cubits high* Approximately 30 m. high, an exaggerated figure. Several surveys and excavations have helped to identify the remains of the perimeter of the siege, traces of the inner apartments of the fortress that was perched on the hill in the shape of a polygon, as well as the approach to the fortress through the ravine and traces of the ancient town. Various projectiles hurled in and other remains were found in the ashes.

176[*d*] *Cisterns* Several cisterns, whose traces and remains are visible, were dug along the ridge, at appropriate levels, to catch and store flood runoff of winter rains. The same system was used at Masada (cf. 280–303 below). A chain of small cisterns in Machaerus led to a large, plastered cistern. The story of the siege is interrupted at this point and resumed in para. 190.

178[*a*] *Rue* A strongly scented perennial herb *(Ruta graveolens)* of the family *Rutacaea* that has bitter leaves and was used in ancient medicine. It is still grown in the country (Luke 11, 42). Another variety grows wild, as in the present case.

180[*b*] *Ravine* The Wadi Zerka, which runs down to the Dead Sea, or a ravine leading to it. The hill of Machaerus is situated a short distance south of the Wadi Zerka.

180[*c*] *Baaras* The warm springs by that name mentioned by the fourth-century church-father Jerome. Two warm springs are situated some 4 km from the shore of the Dead Sea on the southern side of the Wadi Zerka, namely the historic Calirhoe where King Herod came to bathe, and another a similar distance south of the Zerka's outflow to the Dead Sea.

181[*d*]–184[*d*] *Menstrual blood,* etc. Cf. *War* IV, 480. The story refiects superstitions of the time.

190[*a*] *The place* Identified with Machaerus. One can distinguish today the ancient ruins leading to the fortress from the Arab village of al-Mukawer.

190[*b*] *Filling up the eastern ravine.* By an embankment that stood west of the fortress and on the eastern ravine (cf. 174[*c*] above).

191[*c*] *Alien companions* Apparently Nabatean, Greek and Syrian refugees who sought safety in the fortified town below the fortress.

193[*d*] *Avoiding a blockade* Escaping a prolonged siege and its hardships.

209[*a*] *Sent Eleazar back* In conclusion, the Jewish defenders who did not put up as heroic a defense as the Zealots of Masada (300 ff. below) were not put to the sword or enslaved. Following this, Bassus razed the fortress to the ground, including the outer protective walls. The exposure of the stones to the weather for two millennia have put the final touch to the general's destruction. Excavations in progress since 1979 have uncovered many features of the town at the foot of the fortress.

210[*b*] *Jardes* Pronounced *yardey*. Possibly in the lower Jordan jungle area.

touches the patients. (186) Hot-water springs of varying taste flow in the region, some bitter and others very sweet. (187) There are also many fountains of cold water; nor are they confined to the low-lying ground where all are on one level, (188) but what is more remarkable is a cave that can be seen nearby, of no great depth and sheltered by a rock that juts out (189), above which protrude, as it were, two breasts, a little apart, one yielding extremely cold water, the other extremely hot. When mixed, these provide a most pleasant bath possessing beneficial medicinal properties and are particularly restorative for the muscles. The district also contains sulphur and alum.

4. The siege of Machaerus

(190) After viewing the place [*a*] on all sides, Bassus decided to approach it by filling up the eastern ravine [*b*]; he applied himself to this task, endeavoring to raise the embankment with all speed in order to facilitate the siege. (191) The Jewish party trapped within now separated themselves from their alien companions [*c*], regarding them as a mere mob, and compelled them to stay in the lower town and face the first onslaught, (192) while they themselves seized and held the fortress above, both in view of the strength of its defenses and to ensure their own safety, confident that they could obtain pardon by surrendering the place to the Romans. (193) First, however, they wished to test their prospects of avoiding a blockade [*d*], so they made sorties daily and engaged in close combat with those at work on the embankment, suffering heavy casualties, but inflicting heavy losses on the Romans. (194) On all occasions, however, it was the circumstances of the moment which, in the main, decided the victory on either side: of the Jews if they caught their enemy off guard, of those on the embankments if they saw the attack coming and met it in defensive posture. (195) The conclusion of this siege, however, was not determined by these encounters, but a casual and surprising incident forced the Jews to surrender the fortress.

Eleazar's capture

(196) Among the besieged was a young man, bold in enterprise and energetic in action, named Eleazar. (197) He had been prominent in the sorties, inciting most of his comrades to come out and interrupt the building of the siege earthworks, and in the engagements, often doing a great deal of damage to the Romans; he eased the attack for those who dared to sally out with him, and covered the retreat, being the last to withdraw. (198) One day, when the battle had ended and both sides had retired, he, confidently supposing that none of the enemy would start further fighting, stayed outside the gates talking to the defenders on the wall, paying attention only to them. (199) A soldier in the Roman camp named Rufus, a native of Egypt, saw his chance and made a sudden dash upon him, which no one would have expected, picked the man up, armor and all, and, before the spectators on the wall could recover from their astonishment, carried the fellow to the Roman camp. (200) The general ordered him to be stripped, taken to the spot most clearly seen by the onlookers in the town, and flogged with whips. The Jews were terribly distressed by the young man's agony, and the whole town burst into tears and lamentations, showing most excessive concern for one unfortunate individual. (201) Seeing this, Bassus proceeded to play a trick on the enemy, wishing to intensify their distress and thus compel them to surrender the fort as a price for the man's life; (202) nor was he wrong in his expectation. For he ordered a cross to be set up as though he meant to crucify Eleazar immediately, and when the defenders saw this, they were seized with deeper dismay and shrieked that they could not endure such a tragedy. (203) At this point, moreover, Eleazar implored them not to let him undergo the most pitiful of deaths, but to save their own lives by submitting to the might and fortune of the Romans, now that all others had been crushed. (204) They were deeply moved by this appeal, backed by many inside the town who pleaded on his behalf, for he came from a prominent and very large family; so, contrary to their nature, they yielded to pity (205) and hastily dispatched a deputation to negotiate the surrender of the fortress on the understanding that they should depart in safety, taking Eleazar with them. (206) When the Romans and their commander agreed to this, the multitude of the people in the town below heard of the separate agreement that had been made by the Jews and decided that their safest course was to steal away by night. (207) But no sooner had they opened the gates than Bassus was informed by those who had made the agreement with him; they may have begrudged the others their lives, or perhaps dreaded that they themselves might be held responsible for their escape. (208) The boldest fugitives, however, succeeded in breaking their way through and escaping; but of those left in the town, seventeen hundred men were massacred and the women and children enslaved. (209) Feeling that he must honor the agreement with those who had surrendered the fortress, Bassus let them go and sent Eleazar back [*a*].

5. Battle in the forest of Jardes

(210) Having settled these problems, Bassus marched to the forest of Jardes [*b*], since news reached him that many who had earlier escaped from the siege of Jerusalem and Machaerus had congregated in this neighborhood. (211) Arriving at the spot and finding the information correct, he set out first to encircle the whole area with his cavalry to prevent, through his horsemen, the escape of any Jews trying to break through; then he ordered the infantry to cut down the woods among which they had taken cover. (212) This

compelled the Jews to resort to some gallant feat that might enable them to escape by a supreme effort. So rushing out en masse and with loud shouts, they fell upon the encircling foe. (213) These met with stubborn resistance; as one side fought with the fury of despair, the other with unyielding tenacity, the battle dragged on, (214) but it ended very differently for the combatants. Roman casualties were twelve dead and a few wounded, while of the Jews not one survived the battle with all—no less than three thousand—perishing. (215) Among them was their commander, Judas, son of Ari [*c*] who, as stated previously, commanded a company at the siege of Jerusalem and who had effected his escape through some of the underground passages.

6. Confiscation of Jewish land and drastic fiscal measures

(216) About the same time Caesar sent orders to Bassus and to Laberius Maximus, the procurator, to lease out all Jewish land [*a*]. (217) For he founded no city there but reserved the country as his own property [*b*], apart from a locality called Emmaus [*c*] thirty furlongs distant from Jerusalem where he settled eight hundred veterans discharged from the army. (218) On all the Jews [*a*], wherever they lived, he imposed a polltax of two drachmas to be paid yearly into the Capitol, as formerly contributed by them to the Temple at Jerusalem. This was the state of Jewish affairs at the time [*b*].

Chapter VII

1. The misfortunes of Antiochus, king of Commagene (AD 73–74)

(219) In the fourth year of Vespasian's rule [*a*], Antiochus, king of Commagene [*b*], and all his family became involved in great disasters, which happened as follows: (220) Caesennius Paetus [*c*], governor of Syria at the time (whether in good faith or out of enmity toward Antiochus—it is not clear which) sent dispatches to Caesar, (221) alleging that Antiochus with his son Epiphanes had decided to revolt from Rome and was in alliance with the king of Parthia; (222) preventive measures were thus called for to forestall trouble, which might involve the whole empire in a state of war. (223) Caesar could not overlook such an urgent report, for the proximity of the two monarchs made this a matter of special concern; (224) for Samosata, the largest city of Commagene, lying on the Euphrates, would provide the Parthians, if they were so inclined, a very easy crossing and an assured reception. (225) So Paetus, who was accredited and empowered to use his own judgment, did not hesitate, but suddenly, before Antiochus and his staff had any suspicion, he invaded Commagene at the head of the

215[*c*] *Judas,* son of Ari. A Zealot leader who distinguished himself during the siege (*War* VI, 92). His escape is not mentioned specifically along with the others.

216[*a*] *Lease out all Jewish land* Two facts emerge: The totally negative attitude of the new procurator, Laberius Maximus, to Jewish rights, and the almost total loss of Jewish ownership over Jewish land as itemized in 217[*b*] below.

217[*b*] *Reserved the country as his own property* A major portion of the land of Judaea was confiscated by the procurator's men because the Jews were forced off the land or compelled to become tenants on their own acreage and to pay a high percentage of their produce to the authorities. Rabbinic literature paints a contemporary picture of the new agrarian regime. The changes are reflected by two phenomena. First was the appearance of the matzīkīm, a new type of landlord or agent who expelled the Jewish peasant or converted him to a tenant (*Sifre', Deut.* 317, 357; *Midrash Tanhuma* pp. 193, 223 ff.) afflicting him with constant and exhorbitant exactions. These landlords had the support of the government and could ultimately abandon the new holdings or dispose of them. These matzīkīm were chiefly Roman aristocrats, men and women, and some Jews. While numerous Jews were forced off the land, other tracts continued to be held as imperial domain (*praedium Caesaris, M. Demai* 6, 2). Second, the *halakhot* (rabbinical ordinances) of this period were framed to deal with the new agrarian situation by restricting the conditions on which Jews might acquire the land of Jewish holders, surviving or deceased, from whom it had been confiscated under the Roman punitive law. These laws were known as *sikarikon* regulations.

217[*c*] *Emmaus* It is more than thirty furlongs from Jerusalem; in fact about 25 km. The procurator settled eight hundred veterans in this once prospering town (referred to in *War* III, 55; IV, 444, 449; V, 42–67, 552; VI, 229). It had been the site of insurrections against Rome, whereupon it was set on fire. The fifth legion was encamped in the city during the revolt and after, as evidenced by the presence of several tombstones bearing the names of Roman soldiers. It prospered after that, and the Talmud (*Aboda Zara* 85) refers to it as a major site in the *Shephela* plain as well as a seat of Samaritan settlers. It was fed by several springs and irrigated by an elaborate system of canals, pools and reservoirs that were recovered as a result of recent excavations. These excavations have also uncovered various structures, recesses hewn out of the rock and foundations of walls, the remains of Roman villas of the second century AD; a third-century basilica with mosaic floors; another sixth-century Christian basilica with a baptistry and baptismal font and a Byzantine and Crusader church; and in addition, oil presses, pottery, coins, and Roman and Samaritan inscriptions were found. The site was identified with the former Arab village of Imwas and transformed recently into a national park (called Canada Park). It is one of the most evocative sites in the country. It is mentioned in Luke 24, 13 as the place where Jesus appeared to two of His disciples after His resurrection.

218[*a*] *A tax on all Jews.* The plight of the Jewish population became worse in respect of the scale of taxes that they paid. Moreover, the Jews of Palestine and the Diaspora were also obliged to pay an increased head-tax, the *tributum capitis,* and a special Jewish tax for the temple of Jupiter Capitoline in place of the half-shekel formerly paid to the Temple of Jerusalem. This head-tax had in itself a discriminatory character, since no Roman citizen was subjected to it. It was gathered into a special *Fiscus Judaicus* (Suetonius, *Life of Domitian,* 12, 2; *Dio Cassius* LXVII 1–2). Comparing this taxation to that of Egypt at the time, A. C. Johnson in his *Economic Survey of Ancient Times,* II, 1936, states that whereas an Egyptian peasant paid an average of sixty drachmas out of an income of 210–280 drachmas, the Jews in contemporary Judaea paid four times as much (indicated by a remark of Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai who cited the payment of 15 shekels (60 *denarii*) as the average sum paid yearly by the contemporary Jew (*Mekhilta, Bahodesh* 1, pp. 203, 204). The *tributum capitis* imposed on the Jews was not generally based on an average percentage out of a stated income. It may further be deduced from the words of Appian of Alexandria (*Syriaca* 50, 253 and 50 (VIII) that there was also a progressive increase in the rate of the *tributum capitis* owed by the Jews of the provinces of Judaea after the capture of Jerusalem.

218[*b*] *State of Jewish affairs* Josephus does not dwell long over this tragic state of affairs. He lived in Rome, was subject to Roman censorship, and may not have been fully aware of the full extent of this shattering blow to the Jewish population and its economy in Palestine. The shocking poverty resulting from these circumstances is well documented: "Such is the story of a contemporary sage who was accosted by a Jew when riding by donkey and begged him for food, but the Jew died before the sage dismounted to unload his beast (*Tal. Bab. Ta'anith* 21a). We read also about the contemporary disputes among rabbis as to whether the obligation existed to rear orphans or even young girls (*Mish. Ketuboth* 4, 6)... Only a yearly income of 250 shekels (10,000 *dinarii*) justified eating meat every day. Accordingly, the destruction of Jerusalem dealt a shattering blow to the Jewish economy. It eliminated one of the principal hubs of Jewish commerce and crafts as well as the community's largest source of internal and external income.... The economic basis of a large hierarchy had vanished and with it, the regular contributions and dues furnished by the Diaspora; these were now directed to Rome... The remaining population was afflicted by loss of land and the ravaging of its villages and towns, while a series of drought years and increased taxation exacerbated the existent poverty... One can understand the recurrent emergence of groups of outlaws and bandits which were one of the factors leading ultimately to Bar Kochba's last desperate revolt in the reign of Hadrian (AD 132–135)". (S. Appelbaum, *The Jewish People in the First Century*, pp. 698–699).

219[*a*] *Fourth year,* Probably AD 73; but the reference noted in 252[*a, b*] suggests AD 74.

219[*b*] *Commagene* The country bordering Syria to the north.

220[*c*] *Caesennius Paetus* Cf. 59[*d*] above, and the Antioch incidents.

There is an abundance of Roman coins from this period to commemorate the downfall of Judaea, in particular those struck by the Flavian emperors, e.g., the bronze pieces with the emperor's portrait on the obverse and, on the reverse, a Greek legend JUDAIAS EALOKIAS (Captive Judaea), and a series of gold, silver, and bronze coins, also with the emperor on the obverse and, on the reverse, the figure of a Jewish woman, her hands tied, seated under a palm tree, with the legend JUDAEA DEVICTA (Defeated Judaea) or JUDAEA CAPTA (Captive Judaea). Still other coins in circulation included those depicting the winged goddess VICTORIA/AUGUSTA holding a shield and leaning on her knee, with a palm tree in the background (left)

The kingdom of Commagene, situated in the center, between Cappadocia in Asia Minor and northern Syria

226[*a*] *Chalcidice* The district of Chalcis northeast of Syria.

226[*b*] *Emesa* The district around present-day Homs in northeastern Syria.

229[*c*] 120 furlongs, approximately 22.5 km.

233[*a*] *Epiphanes,* who appeared with his Macedonians in a foolhardy venture during the siege of Jerusalem (*War* V, 466).

237[*b*] *Bologeses* Cf. VII, 105.

244[*a*] *Alani* Josephus' reference to the Alani "somewhere" has been disputed by most commentators. He did, however, do so in *War* VII, 90, 92 when he mentioned the Sarmatians, as indicated in note 92[*d*] above. Hence the confusion of the names Sarmatians and Alani is only apparent. "The Alani name was not known to the Romans till AD 64–65 and was easily confused with Albani as by Tacitus' authority" (CAH X, p. 777). They crossed the so-called *Caspia via* (Caspian Route) by which the Iberians had brought a horde of Sarmatians over the Caucasus to attack the Parthians (*War* VII, 99, 92).

244[*b*] *The Scythians* lived in the Crimean peninsula and the steppes of eastern Europe as well as the regions north and northeast of the Black Sea and east of the Aral Sea. *The Taneis:* the Don River (in present southwest Russia). *Maeotis:* Sea of Azov in the Black Sea region.

245[*c*] *Alexander... iron gates* Josephus seems to refer to the pass of Darial, the "Gate of the Alani," through which ran the main route over the central Caucasus... to the valley of the river Terek. The Sarmatian Gate was wrongly called the Caspian Gates, "the true Caspian Gates being the defile traversed by Alexander the Great" (CAH, p. 777). In any case, Josephus' intention was to describe a sudden raid of the Alani into Media. Armenian and Georgian bards refer to the gates raised by Alexander in the Caucasus mountain passes to stop the raiders from the northern steppes.

247[*d*] *Pacorus* Brother of Bologeses I, the Parthian king mentioned in para. 237.

sixth legion, supplemented by some cohorts and a few squadrons of cavalry, (226) and further assisted by the kings of the regions named Chalcidice [*a*] and Emesa [*b*], Aristobulus and Soemus. (227) The invasion was unopposed, as none of the natives were prepared to lift a hand against them. (228) When Antiochus was suddenly faced with the unexpected developments, he did not for a moment contemplate war with Rome, but decided to retire from his kingdom, leaving everything as it was, and to slip away in a chariot with his wife and children, expecting by this move to convince the Romans of his innocence. (229) So he proceeded one hundred and twenty furlongs [*c*] away from the city, into the plain and encamped there.

2. The flight of Antiochus and his sons

(230) Paetus sent a force to occupy Samosata, thus securing the city, while he, with the rest of his force, set off in pursuit of Antiochus. (231) But even in such desperate straits, the king could not bring himself to oppose the Romans and, bewailing his lot, he was ready to submit to the suffering he might have to endure. (232) But his sons, braced by youth, military experience, and unusual physical strength, could not bring themselves to submit without a struggle; (233) and so Epiphanes [*a*] and Callinicus resorted to arms. The battle—which lasted the whole day—was violent, the princes displaying great courage; their forces were also intact when night broke off the struggle. (234) But even when the battle ended in this manner, Antiochus did not see fit to stay, but he fled to Cilicia with his wife and daughters, thereby breaking the morale of his own troops, (235) for, as he had evidently given up his realm, they mutinied and went over to the Romans, manifesting their despair. (236) Epiphanes and his followers, accordingly, were obliged to flee from the enemy before their allies deserted them completely, no more than ten horsemen crossing the Euphrates with the two brothers; (237) from there they rode unmolested to Bologeses [*b*], king of Parthia, who, far from despising them as fugitives, treated them with every mark of respect as though they enjoyed their old prosperity.

3. Antiochus' reconciliation with Vespasian

(238) When Antiochus arrived at Tarsus in Cilicia, Paetus sent a centurion after him and dispatched him in chains to Rome. (239) But Vespasian refused to let the king be brought to him in this condition, thinking it more fitting to honor an old friendship than to make war a pretext for inexorable animosity. (240) He accordingly gave instructions while he was still on the way, that he should be released from his fetters, abandon his journey to Rome, and remain for the present in Lacedaemon; he also assigned him a large revenue, enabling him to maintain himself not only in luxury but regally. (241) When the news reached Epiphanes and his brother, hitherto so anxious about

The wars of the Romans against the Alani Scythians in eastern Europe as described on Trajan's Column in Rome

their father, they were greatly relieved of serious and unbearable anxiety. (242) They also hoped that Caesar would be reconciled to them through Bologeses' intervention on their behalf; for though they were living in comfort, they could not bear to live outside the Roman Empire. (243) So Caesar graciously granted them safe conduct as they came to Rome, where their father quickly joined them from Lacedaemon; they took up their abode there and were treated with all honor.

4. The invasion of the Alani Scythians and the plunder of Media

(244) The Alani, to whom we referred earlier somewhere [*a*], was a race of Scythians [*b*] living near the Tanais [*b*] and Lake Maeotis [*b*]. (245) As they planned about this time to raid Media and beyond in search of loot, they entered into negotiations with the king of the Hyrcanians, for he was master of the pass that Alexander had closed with iron gates [*c*]. (246) After he granted them passage, masses of them poured in on the unsuspecting Medes and plundered their populous country, rich with livestock of every kind, and none ventured to oppose them. (247) For Pacorus [*d*], king of the country, had fled in terror up to his redoubts, having abandoned all his possessions, and managed with difficulty to recover from the

raiders his wife and concubines, who had been taken prisoners, after paying a ransom of a hundred talents. (248) They consequently pursued their raids with the utmost ease and without opposition and advanced as far as Armenia, plundering everything. (249) Tiridates [*e*] who ruled that country, met them, gave battle, and narrowly escaped being taken alive during the fighting; (250) he was lassoed by someone from a distance and would have been dragged off had he not quickly cut the rope with his sword and managed to escape. (251) The Alani, whose savagery was aroused even more by the battle, ravaged the country and, carrying off masses of the population and enormous booty from both kingdoms, returned again to their own country.

C. THE SIEGE OF MASADA

Chapter VIII

1. Flavius Silva's attack on Masada

(252) In Judaea, Bassus had died [*a*] and the governor succeeding him was Flavius Silva [*b*], who, seeing the whole of the country subjugated by Roman arms, and only one fortress holding out, marshaled all available forces in the district and marched out against it. This fortress was called Masada [*c*]. (253) It was occupied by the Sicarii [*d*] under the command of an influential leader named Eleazar, a descendant of the Judas [*e*] who, as recorded earlier [*e*], induced multitudes of Jews to refuse to register when Quirinius was sent as censor [*f*] to Judaea. (254) At that time the Sicarii combined against those prepared to submit to Rome and in every way treated them as deadly enemies, looting their property, rounding up their cattle, and setting their homes on fire; (255) for they protested that such persons were no better than foreigners who threw away in such cowardly fashion the highly-prized freedom won by the Jews and avowedly chose to live under the Roman yoke. (256) In reality this was a mere pretext by which they cloaked their cruelty and avarice, and the proof lay in their own actions. (257) For the people who had joined with them in the revolt and who fought by their side in the war with Rome were to suffer still worse atrocities at their hands, (258) and when they were again proved guilty of lies in this pretext, they merely tyrannized [*g*] the more those who in justifying themselves condemned their villainy.

The author's recriminations and wholesale condemnation of the Sicarii, Zealots, and others

(259) Somehow those days had become so productive of every kind of crime among the Jews as to leave no deed of shame uncommitted; nor, if someone had used his powers of invention to devise it, could he have discovered any fresh form of vice; (260) so universal

249[*e*] *Tiridates* Another brother of Bologeses I.

252[*a*] *Bassus* Cf. VII, 190–216.

252[*b*] *Flavius Silva* After the revolt, Judaea was converted into a regular imperial province governed by a member of the senatorial rank holding the title of *legatus Augusti pro-praetore.*

252[*c*] *Masada* The mountain fortified complex in Herodian and post-Herodian days is described below under note 285[*c*]. Cf. IV, 399–404.

253[*d*] *Sicarii* The "dagger-men," a special and more activist group of the Zealots' social and revolutionary movement; cf. *War* II, 254–257. They had occupied the stronghold of Masada since AD 66 (IV, 400–406), and it served as the last refuge of the persecuted patriots. After Simon-bar-Giora withdrew from Jerusalem and away from the high priest Hanan ben Hanan (IV, 192–207; 208–224 ff.), he sought refuge with the Sicarii in Masada. We learn from IV, 503–507 that the Sicarii dissociated themselves from large-scale collaboration with the Zealots in a manner that would have kept them far from their home base. After a time, Simon-bar-Giora returned to Jerusalem and henceforth nothing is heard of the Sicarii in Masada until after the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans.

253[*e*] *Eleazar... Judas* Cf. *War* II, 447. The writings of Josephus do not refer to the fate of Judas the Gaulanite, but from the speech of Rabban Gamaliel, as recorded in Acts 5, 37, we learn that Judas, the son of Ezechias the Galilean, or rather the Gaulanite, was killed as a result of his opposition to the census-taking in the days of Quirinius, governor of Syria, and his call to rebellion. The members of this patriotic clan followed tenaciously their anti-Roman tradition, emphasizing their relationship to Judas and their pride in the ideology of the movement (cf. *War* II, 440 and comments). The memory of Judas seems to have been overshadowed by the memory of his father Ezechias. Menahem was the grandson of Judas (this corrects Josephus' text in VII, 253, which regards Eleazar as a grandson) but the strong family tradition of Judas and his descendants may be linked with the "Fourth philosophy" mentioned respectfully by Josephus in *Antiquities* XVIII, 23–25, whose followers the author does not brand as "brigands." Family traditions of this type represent yet another important factor in Jewish society of Second-Temple times. Another descendant of this patriotic clan, as stated, was Menahem, head of the Sicarii, who was murdered in Jerusalem (II, 408, 433–448). The last well-known scion of this line was Eleazar, son of Jairus, who fled to Masada and was its "tyrant" until AD 74.

253[*f*] *Censor* Conducting a census for purposes of taxation, as in the days of Quirinius (II, 433).

258[*g*] *Tyrannized* Acts of terrorism were carried out by the Zealots and Sicarii in the years of the social and political revolt against Rome (AD 66–70), which Josephus condemns wholesale in this digression from the main narrative of events at Masada, which resume in para. 275. It is also relevant to determine how contemporary Jewish tradition regarded them. They were termed *biryonē* (zealots) in a meliorative sense in *Lament. Rabbati* and *Pesiqta Rabbati,* which take pride in them, and "in the deeds of the men of Jerusalem." With the exception of later Talmudic sayings, the *biryonē* are regarded as men who had the honor of the nation at heart. Dio Cassius (66, 5) did not call them wicked as did Josephus in most cases.

265[*a*] *To power* Cf. *War* IV, 564 ff.

267[*b*] *Chief priests.* Cf. IV, 315.

272[*a*] *Agonizing forms* Referring to the horrible punishment inflicted on Zealots in Alexandria and their heroic death (VII, 271–274).

273[*b*]–274[*c*] *No suffering... savagery* The wholesale vindictive judgment pronounced over this period does not try to differentiate between the "brigands" (the Zealots) and guiltless Jews. The course of events, according to Josephus, corrupted all and brought on the ultimate catastrophe. Granted that this is Josephus' main political thesis, one cannot help marveling at his continued tone of vindictiveness at the moment he begins unfolding the chapters of supreme sacrifice at Masada in the subsequent paras. 304–506. This abrupt variation from one mood to another provides food for thought, and a further comment will be given in Chapter IX (389 ff.) and preceding comments.

was the contagion, whether in public or private life, and moreover, so determined were they to emulate each other in impiety toward God and injustice to their neighbors, the men of power oppressing the masses, and the masses striving to destroy those in power. (261) The latter were bent on tyranny, the former on violence and on robbing the property of the rich. (262) The Sicarii were the first to begin this lawlessness and barbarity to kinsmen; they left no word unspoken to insult, no deed untried to destroy the objects of their conspiracy. (263) Yet even they appeared gentle when compared with John; for not only did he put to death all those who advocated just and salutary courses, treating such persons as his most bitter enemies among the citizens, but by his public actions he also subjected his country to countless evils such as a man was sure to do if he had already dared to practice impiety even toward God. (264) He had unlawful dishes served at his table, and he set aside the purifications observed by our ancestors; so it was no longer surprising that one too mad to show piety toward God could show no gentleness and kindness toward men. (265) Again, there was Simon, son of Gioras—what crimes did he not commit? Or what outrage was not perpetrated against the free citizens who had raised him to power [*a*]? (266) What friendship or kinship did not increase the wantonness of their daily murders? For to mistreat aliens they considered an act of petty crime, but thought it a brilliant deed to savage their closest relatives. (267) Yet, even their madness was nothing compared to the frenzy of the Idumaeans. For these most despicable wretches, after butchering the chief priests [*b*], so that no trace of divine worship might be maintained, destroyed everything that remained of civil organization, thus permeating the whole national structure with lawlessness. (268) No one could equal the so-called Zealots in this; this party justified its name by its deeds; (269) for they followed every bad example, and there was no crime ever recorded that they did not copy zealously. (270) And yet they gave themselves this title in view of their professed zeal for what was right, either mocking their victims, brutes that they were, or regarding the greatest of evils good. (271) And thus it was that each found a fitting end, God sentencing all of them to the penalty they deserved. (272) For every torment that human nature can endure descended upon them to the very end of their life, when they faced death in all its agonizing forms [*a*]. (273) And yet one may say that they suffered less misery than they inflicted; for no suffering could match what they deserved [*b*]. (274) But this is not the time to lament the victims of their savagery in a manner they deserve [*c*]; I will therefore take up the story where I broke it off [*d*].

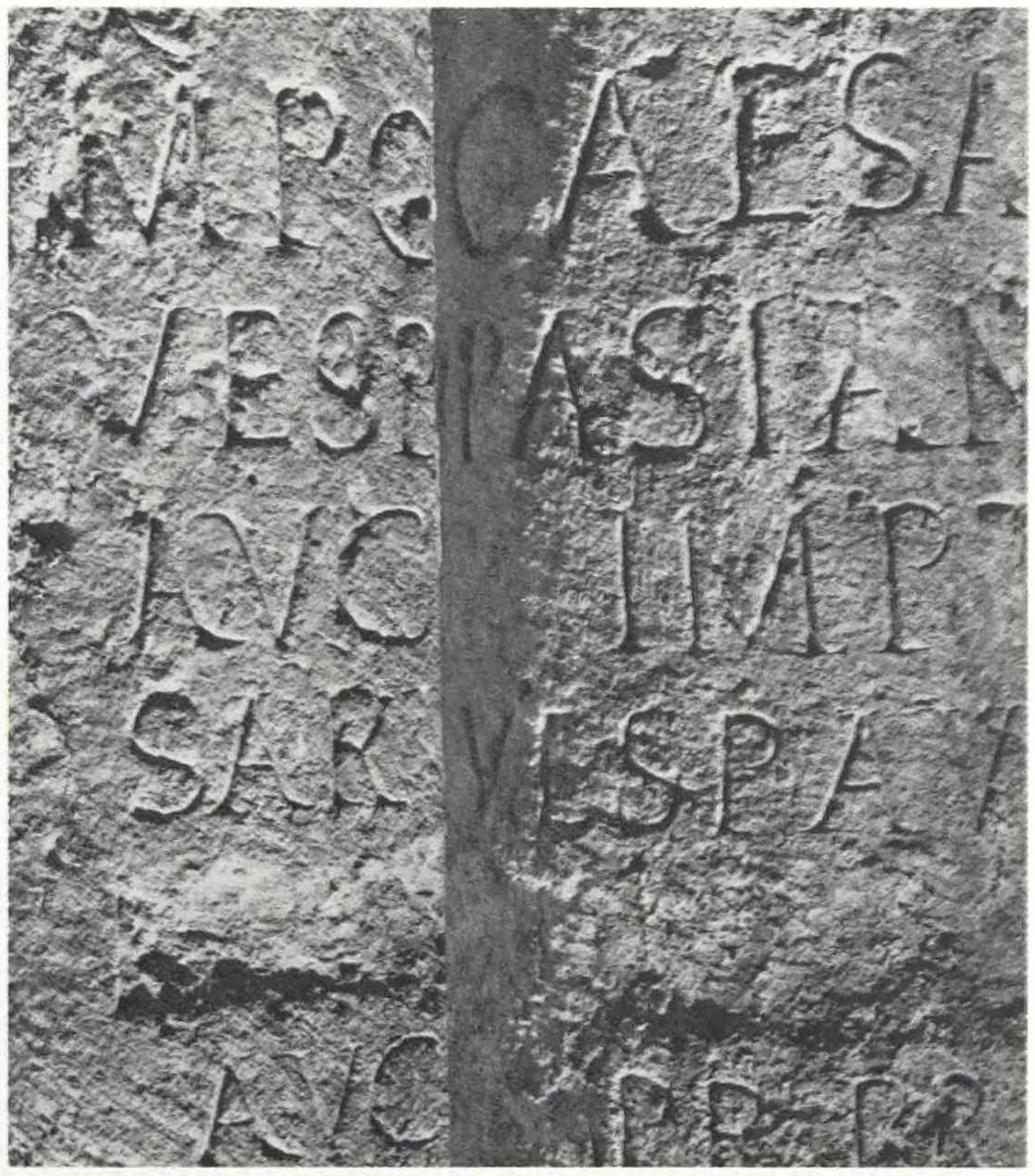
2. Silva's preparations for the siege

(275) The Roman general came at the head of his forces [*a*] against Eleazar and the Sicarii who held

274[*d*] *Broke it off* The Zealots at Masada. A group of Zealots and their families held Masada from the beginning of the revolt (AD 66) after having destroyed its Roman garrison. Following the fall of Jerusalem in 70, they were joined by a few survivors from the devastated capital who had evaded capture and escaped through the Judean wilderness, fully determined to continue their battle for freedom and their ideals and way of life. With the fortress of Masada as their base of operations, they harried the Romans for about four years.

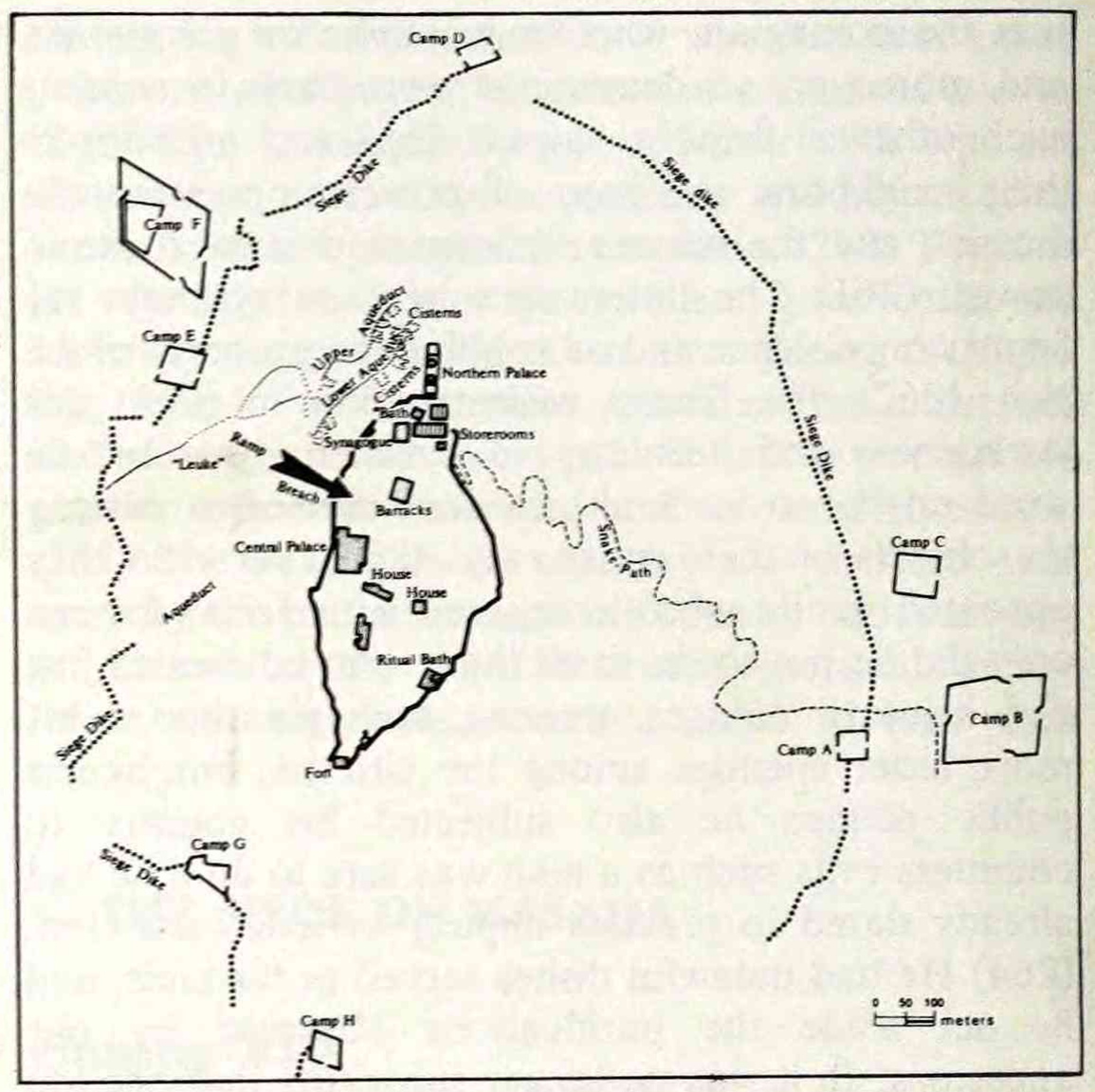
275[*a*] *The Roman... forces* Josephus opens the narrative of the siege of Masada in the ensuing paragraphs, to 279, then interrupts it at 280 to provide a description of the place (up to para. 330).

A Roman column, which was used in later foundation-works close to the Temple Mount, recorded Emperor Vespasian. The fifth line was effaced except for the letter L. The last three lines record the commander of the Tenth Legion — namely Flavius Silva (fifth line bottom) *(see p. 456)*



IMPCAESAI
VESPASIAN
AVG IMPT
SARVESPAVG
L FLAVIVS SILVA
AVG PR PR
LEG X FR

On the right: Siege plan of Masada. The main structures named in the plan can be identified on the photo opposite, while further details are given below



Below: In order to follow Josephus' indications of the spots he mentions, it is best to start with the stepped palace (overlooking the precipices), namely, the Northern Palace in the plan and its three levels; above it are the storeroom structures and to their right the northern end of the casemate wall that encircles the top of Masada; the barracks are in the middle; finally, on the right side, the central (western) palace. To the right of the northern terraced palace are white horizontal lines, or channels, which gave access to two levels of mammoth cisterns. The channels start at a wadi situated at a higher level than the bottom of the precipices. The mounting path on the right is the "white" cliff, or promontory, described in VII. 305, where Silva centered his main attack. The "snake-path" climbed in the opposite direction

Masada, overlooking the Dead Sea

The reconstructed storehouses of Masada

Underground heating stones under the floor of the bath of Masada

Masada. He promptly subdued the whole district [*b*], stationed garrisons at the most suitable points, (276) raised a wall [*c*] around all of the fortress to prevent the besieged from escaping, and posted sentries to guard it. (277) He established his own headquarters at a spot that seemed most convenient for directing the siege, where the rock on which the fortress was built abutted on the adjacent mountain [*d*], though it was poorly situated because of the inaccessibility of supplies. (278) For not only food was carried from a distance, at the cost of painful toil for the Jews [*e*] detailed for this duty, but even water had to be brought to the camp as there was no spring in the neighborhood. (279) After completing these arrangements [*a*], Silva began the siege operations, which involved great skill and immense exertions in view of the strength of the fortress, which will be described below.

3. The great rock of Masada and its defenses

(280) A vast rock with a very large perimeter and lofty from end to end is abruptly broken off on every side by deep canyons; the precipices rise sheer from a bottom that is out of sight, and from it rise cliffs on which no living being can get a foothold, except in two places where the rock can be climbed with great difficulty. (281) One of these paths leads from the Lake Asphaltitis [*b*] on the east, the other leads from the west and is an easier route. (282) They call the former the "snake" [*c*] because of its narrowness and its con-

275[*b*] *The whole district* The wilderness of Judaea close to and facing the Dead Sea; see map.

276[*c*] *A wall* A siege wall or circumvallation more than 3,700 m. long. "The powerful efforts put in the construction of the siege wall... even built on parts of the slope which anyway were almost unnegotiable—arouses our wonder to this day. Already six feet thick, its eastern section was further fortified by twelve towers built at intervals of 80 to 100 yards. No less impressive are the eight camps at various points around the base of the fortress, so well preserved that from the air, or from the edge of the Masada summit, they look today as though they had just been abandoned" (Y. Yadin, *Masada,* p. 212; see illustrations).

277[*d*] *Headquarters... adjacent mountain.* "In camp F,... in the west which measures 117 × 144 m... there were two large camps and two small ones, all outside the circumvallation which lay between them and the fortress. This camp stands slightly to the north close to the assault ramp (to the west), and from this vantage point Silva could follow the course of battle with ease" (*ibid.*, p. 213).

278[*e*] *Jews* Prisoners who carried water from distant springs in the wilderness, possibly from as far as the oasis of Engeddi.

279[*a*] *Arrangements* Josephus' description of Masada starts at para. 280 and ends at 330, where he resumes the story of the siege.

281[*b*] *Lake Asphaltitis* The Dead Sea, described in *War* IV, 476–482. It lies in full view of Masada.

282[*c*] *The "snake"* as illustrated.

The Romans encircled the mountain (arrow) with a dike 4,700 yards long and built eight camps to command the approaches and exits. Their stone walls were 2 ft. thick and 4 ft. high, with platforms on which the tents could be fixed. Inside the tents were traces of three-sided couches of earth and stone on which the soldiers slept and dined. Even the cooking hearths outside the tents are preserved

284[*d*] *Thirty furlongs* Approximately 5.7 km.

285[*a*] *High priest Jonathan* The identity of this Hasmonean priest and prince was in dispute for a long time, as historians and commentators tended to identify Jonathan with the brother of Judas the Maccabee, the first Hasmonean liberator (*War* I, 48 ff.). Y. Yadin, however, is of the opinion that the only remains at Masada before Herod's time would identify this Jonathan with King Alexander Jannaeus (*War* I, 85; 90–98). Scores of coins struck by this king were found there, and any buildings and cisterns constructed on the site in the period before Herod were the work of King Alexander Jannaeus (*ibid.*, p. 203).

285[*b*] *Masada,* in Hebrew Metsada ("fortress") mispronounced into Greek *Masada.*

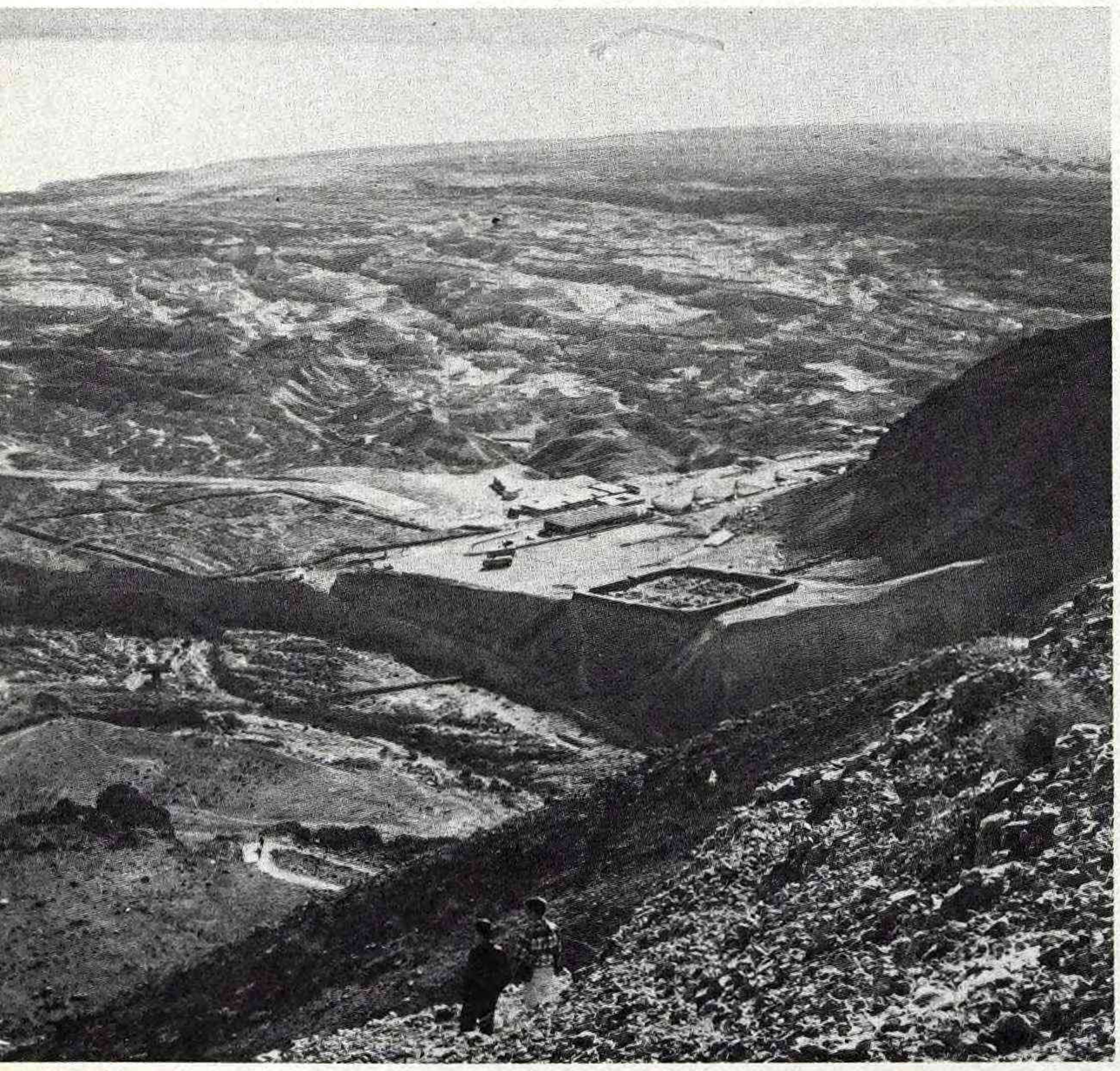
285[*c*] *Summary description of Masada* The thorough excavation work (and partial reconstruction of certain parts) carried out by Y. Yadin and his team fills in and verifies the detailed accounts of Josephus and helps to bridge the gaps in the total picture (which Josephus reconstructed in Rome from reports that were transmitted to him). Herod built the royal fortress in 30 BC on the site of the former Hasmonean inaccessible rock (cf. 285[*a*]). It would have been an exceptional natural stronghold even without artificial fortifications. The "snake" on the east and the route on the west are still there. The crag is still cut off from its bare surroundings by steep cliffs that prevent all access except by a steep footpath and cable car. Herod erected, in the upper area of the rock, a series of palaces, administrative buildings, barracks, an extensive complex of magazines and stores as well as a well-appointed set of Roman baths. An ingenious and efficient system of water supply enabled the place to withstand a prolonged siege. It provided a supply of running water for the inhabitants' use. There was sufficient water even for the baths, including the *mikvehs* (ritual immersion baths). Herod's principal palaces were brought to light by Y. Yadin's archaeological expedition, as were three smaller palaces designed to house Herod's large household in times of need. Josephus' report is not explicit on this point.

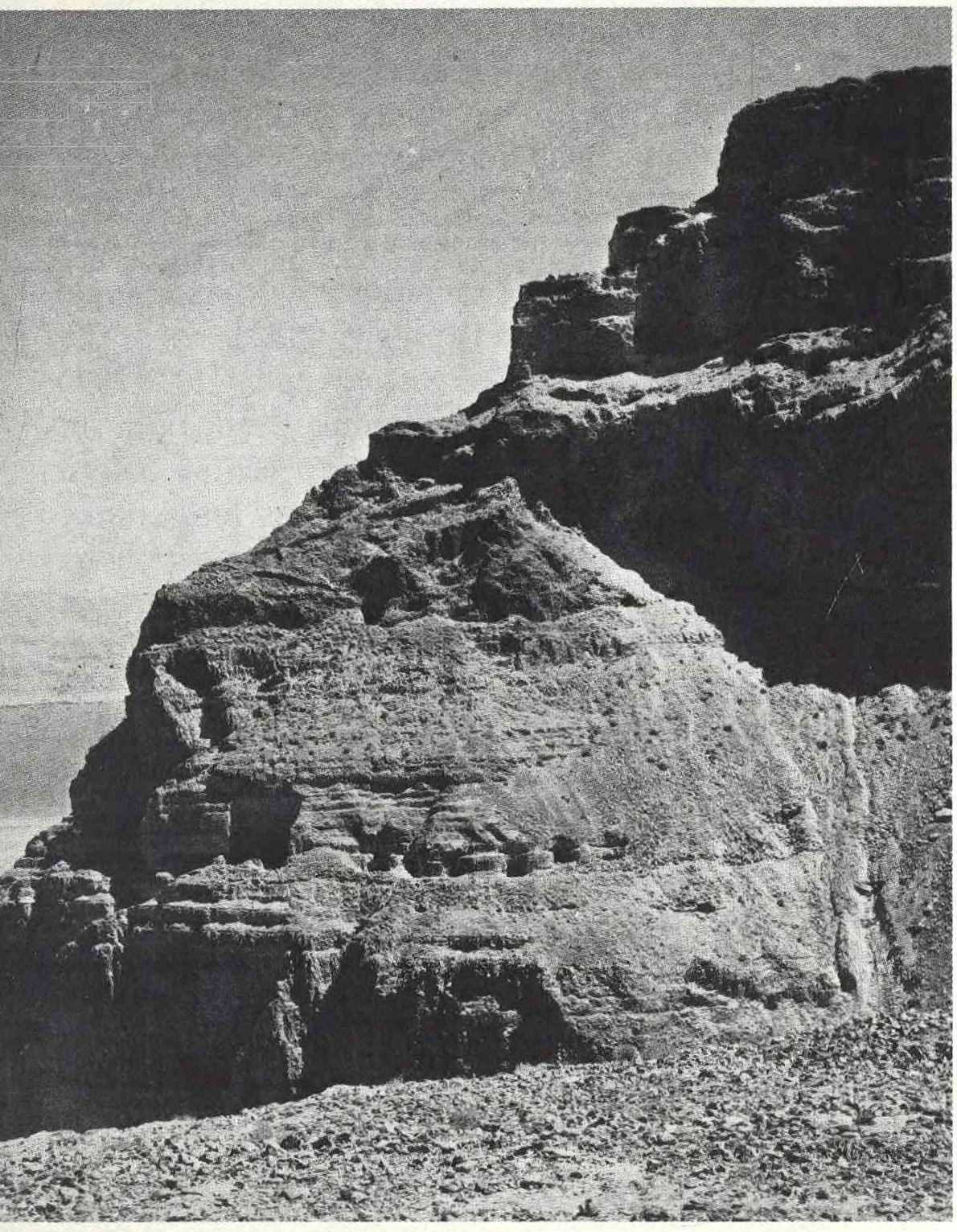
286[*d*] *White stone wall* "The measurements of the wall, as we found from our excavations, on the whole matched those given by Josephus. It is some 1,400 yards in length and about four-and-a-half yards in width (this is the space between the two casemate walls, and not including the thickness). The measurements of height... are no doubt exaggerated. This was due to an optical illusion for anyone looking at it from the outside. Josephus' report that it was a wall of 'white stone' was prompted, however, by the impression received by such an observer for the wall was covered with a white plaster, fragments of which were found in many places" (*ibid.*, p. 141).

stantly winding course; it is broken as it rounds the jutting cliffs and often turns back on itself, then gradually lengthens out again, making agonizing progress. (283) Anyone walking along this route must firmly place each foot alternately. Destruction is an obvious threat, for on either side yawns an abyss so terrifying as to daunt the boldest. (284) After following such a track for thirty furlongs [*d*], one reaches the summit, which, instead of narrowing to a sharp peak, expands into a plateau. (285) On this the high priest Jonathan [*a*] first built a fortress and called it Masada [*b*]. Later King Herod devoted serious care to improve the place [*c*]. (286) He enclosed the entire summit, a circumference measuring seven furlongs, with a white stone wall [*d*], twelve cubits high and eight broad; (287) and on it he erected thirty-seven towers fifty cubits high; these gave access to dwellings [*e*] constructed around the whole interior of the wall. (288) For the actual top of the mountain consisted of rich soil softer than any plain, and the king reserved it for cultivation [*a*], so that in the eventual shortage of food from outside this should not cause suffering to those who committed their lives to protect the fortress.

Below left: The Romans could approach Masada only through a long and arduous southern Negeb route, which led to the southern end of the Dead Sea, shown in the foreground

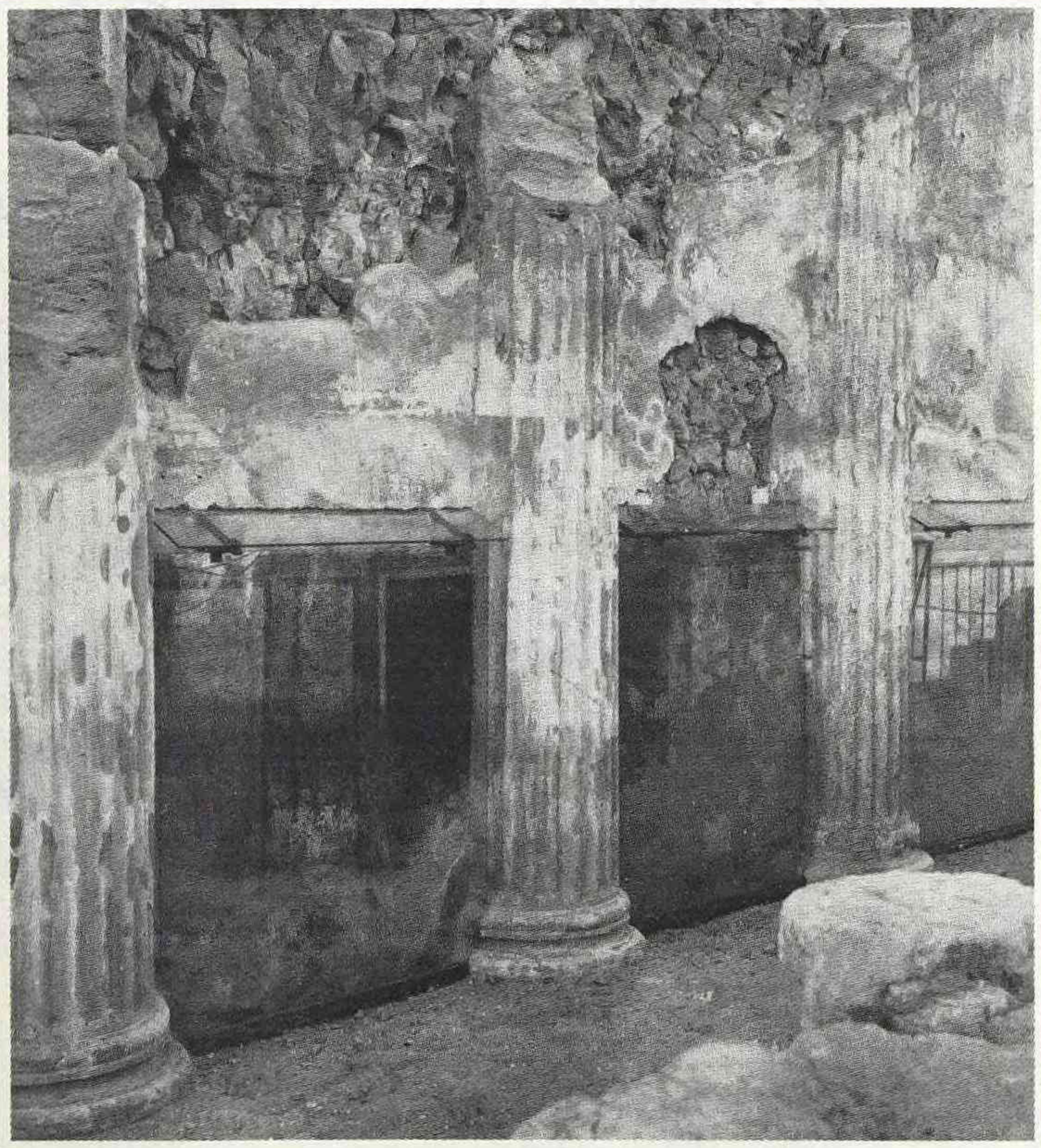
Below right: The Zealots built their modest homes within the double casemate walls that surrounded the rock





287[e] *The casemate dwellings and mode of life of the Zealots* The use to which the casemate walls ("the white stone wall") were put was not well known to Josephus. The space between the parallel casemate walls "offered an excellent solution for the problem of housing for the numerous rebels and their families, for the Masada of Herod had not been designed for such a purpose" (*ibid.,* p. 144). The casemate chambers comprised rooms of varying lengths up to 35 m.; here were quartered, it would seem, most of the garrison under Herod; and between AD 66 and 74 the Zealot families lived in them. The wall contained 70 rooms in all. The Zealots lived in these mud-plastered chambers, or in modest structures made of stone and mud put up as lean-to's, added to the casemate dwellings, or poor public buildings, or even on the open ground of the summit" (*ibid.*, p. 141–161). The Zealots had made architectural additions to the casemate chambers by building partitions in the large chambers, dividing them into smaller dwelling units that could serve a few families, and they added cupboards to the wall and built small ovens. "In the kitchen... we unearthed various types of stones and fire-places... In one place we found cooking-pots and kettles... there were also stoves of superior type with recesses shaped in the upper part, probably to hold bowls while food was being poured into them... near these stoves were found remains of oil and flour jars, and faggots which had been left unused... In the chambers we discovered hundreds of coins.... In a few places we found hoards hidden under the floor" (*ibid.,* p. 155–156). *A synagogue:* After the Zealot occupation of Masada few alterations were made; they included the conversion to a synagogue of a small east-west oriented hall in the north sector of the wall by the addition of rows of stone benches along the walls. In a hidden recess or reliquary *(geniza)* fragments of Bible scrolls were found, namely Ezekiel" (*ibid.,* pp. 181–186). In addition, two ritual immersion baths (mikvehs) were found. They had been constructed by the Zealots in accordance with the *halakha* prescriptions (pp. 164–167). Some of the shards discovered (cf. below) show meticulousness in observing the precepts and punctiliousness with regard to the laws of "tithes" (a tenth part of the produce set aside as a religious offering (*Num.* 18, 24; *Levit.* 27, 30–31; *Deuter.* 14, 22–26). The intimate mode of life of the Zealots of Masada and their religious observances is further enhanced by the discovery of several scrolls, many of them identical with the scrolls of the Dead Sea sectaries of Qumran (*War* II, 120–161). Others were segments from the Book of Leviticus and the Psalms, as well as the apocryphal Wisdom of ben-Sirach, "It seems to me that the discovery of this scroll serves as proof that the Essenes also participated in the great revolt against the Romans.... If they had reached the recognition that the great revolt was in fact the ordained war against the Romans... there would have been no reason, in terms of their beliefs and concepts, not to take part in it. Moreover, there is in fact direct evidence [in another part of the writings of Josephus] of Essene participation in the war.... He lists there the names of the commanders of the revolt and their sectors, and relates that the commander of the important central sector was someone named John the Essene (*War* II, 567; III, 11, 19)... it is likely that all who fought together and survived found shelter there, among them the Essene participants" (*ibid.,* p. 174).

288[a] *Cultivation* After the winter rains the plateau is changed into an expanse of green and flowers. The Zealots raised vegetables on the site.



Above left: Openings to the mammoth water cisterns situated along the flank of the mountain (center of the picture). The cisterns were fed by occasional winter rains that flooded a wadi in the west situated at their level

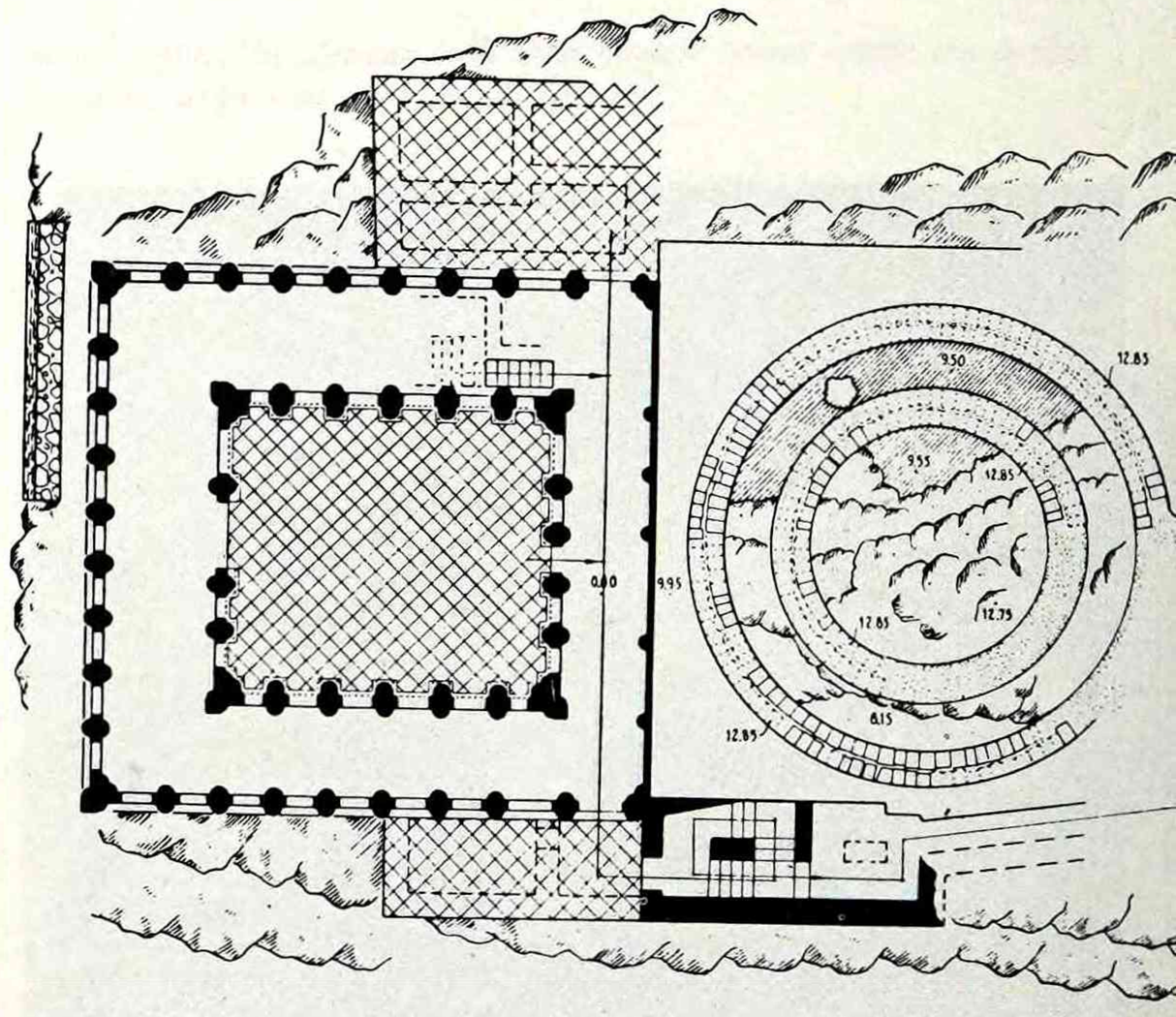
Below: Detail of the palace on the northern slope

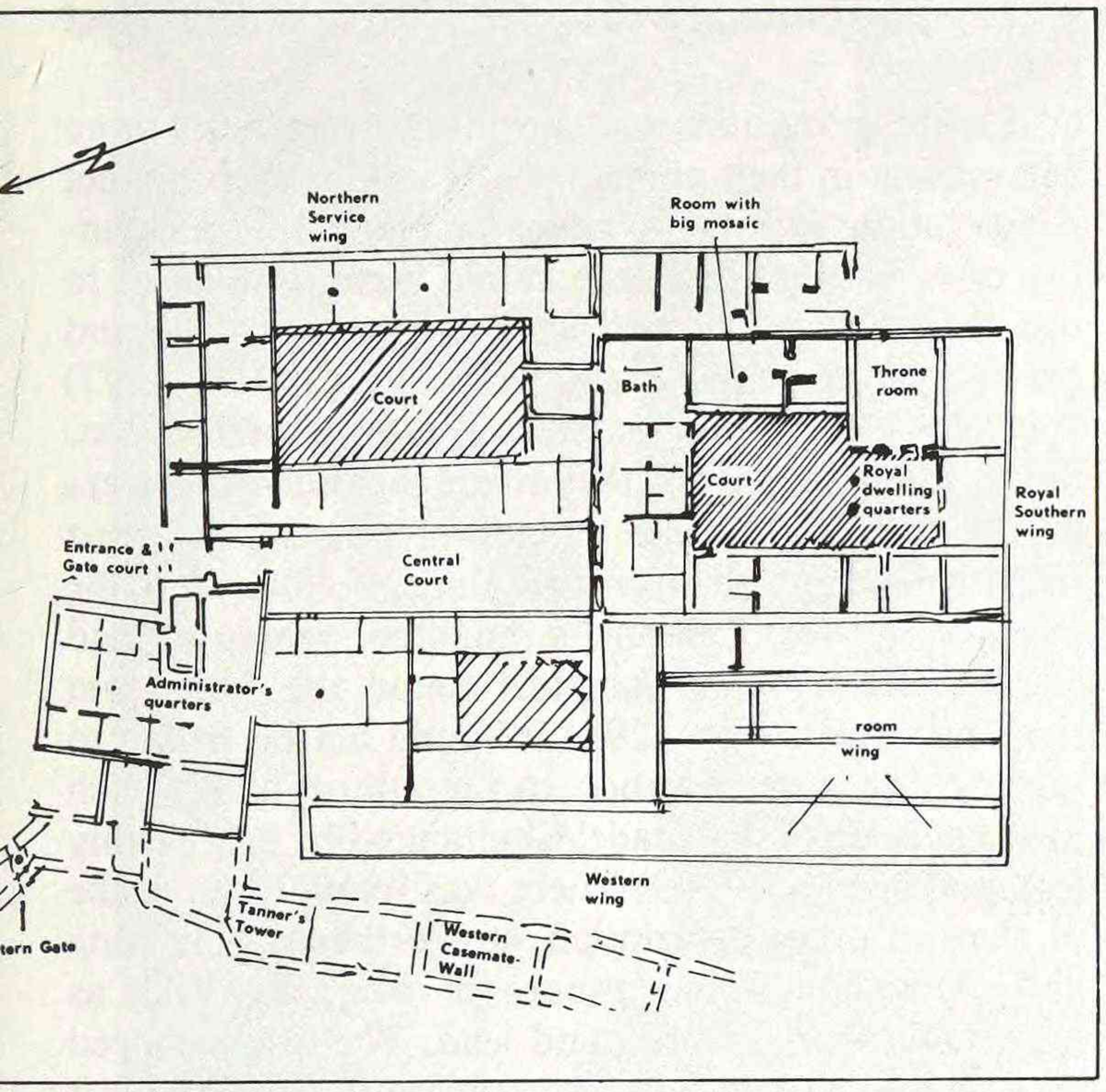
289[*b*] *Palace* Before Y. Yadin excavated Masada and uncovered the western palace (described below), scholars identified it with the palace described in note 289[*c*] which Josephus describes as "inclining in a northern direction." But besides the one Josephus described at the northern edge, the *largest building on Masada* stood on the western edge of the rock, close to the ramp and western gate. "We have shown that the one described by Josephus is at the northern edge, and the ommission of a mention of the second palace remains a problem; but it does not negate its actual existence." *As regards this western palace.* It is the largest palatial building at Masada with an area of 4,000 square m. and it comprises three wings, a service block and workshops, and a block of storerooms. The living rooms in the royal apartment are built around a central court, following a distinct Hellenistic plan. The entrance to the throne-room and *triclinia* (dining-hall) provided with couches for reclining at meals, is at the south corner of the courts through two successive pairs of columns. The residential wing comprised two stories. A well appointed bathroom and other service rooms flanked the living rooms whose beauty and decoration can be gauged by our illustrations. The service wing and workshops, which included a potter's shop, were also built around a central court. *The storage block* included a storeroom 70 m. long. *Decoration of the western palace.* Its walls were also plastered with stucco in the Herodian style. The dining room was decorated with a colored mosaic floor with geometric borders and plant motifs, such as vines, grape-clusters, fig-leaves and pomegranates (*ibid.*, pp. 116–133), similar to several items uncovered by the excavation conducted by B. Mazar at the foot of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. (*Jerusalem Revealed,* p. 56). Beside the northern and western palace, three additional smaller palaces, as stated, were built to plans identical with that of the residential palace. A well-planned swimming pool was constructed behind the latter.

289[*c*] *Palace... beneath the ramparts... inclining in a northern direction* Namely, the northern terraced palace clearly identified since the 1950s. It was the finest achievement of the king's program and no less an architectural achievement of the builder-ruler than the Temple Mount complex, the royal palace and Citadel in Jerusalem, or Herodium (described in previous pages). This palace was established at the northern end of the rock on *three natural rock terraces* prepared and widened to enable extensive and durable constructions. This plan was carried out by means of a most impressive series of retaining walls that overhung the abyss. The uppermost terrace had four living rooms arranged around an internal court, and a semicircular porch at the edge of the rock to the north. This was surrounded by a double colonnade facing the rugged and breathtaking expanses of the wilderness of Judaea. A flight of steps led down from the upper to the lower terrace, which was twenty m. lower. On this a circular structure was erected (of which only the foundations remained). It had been adorned with two rows of columns and was designed as a beautiful place of retreat for the inhabitants of the palace. It formed also an integral part of the architecture and artistic fabric of this unique rock palace.

290[*a*] *Cut from a single block* Some other interesting details emerge from Josephus' descriptions, such as the astounding "single block", imagined by Josephus. The columns were actually constructed of a few drums of stone, plastered and then grooved, giving them the appearance of giant sculptural monolithic columns, crowned with Corinthian capitals. The masons marked each column section with a Hebrew letter, as is evident from many unused drums left *in situ.*

(289) He built a palace [*b*] also on the western slope beneath the ramparts on the crest and inclining in a northerly direction [*c*]. The palace wall was strong and of great height, with four towers at the corners, sixty cubits high. (290) The design of the interior apartments, porticoes, and baths was varied and magnificent, the supporting columns cut from a single block [*a*] in every case, and the walls and floors of the rooms paved with stones of varied hues [*b*]. (291) Moreover, at every spot where people lived, both on the plateau and around the palace, as well as before the wall, he had cut out in the rock many large tanks as reservoirs for water, ensuring as ample a supply as where springs can be used. (292) A sunken road [*a*] led from the palace to the top of the hill, invisible from outside. Nor was it easy for the enemy to make use even of the visible road [*a*]; (293) for the eastern route, as stated [*b*] above, is by nature impracticable, while the western approach was barred at its narrowest point by a large tower, at least a thousand cubits [*c*] from the crest. It was neither possible to bypass nor easy to capture; while it made it difficult even for innocent travelers to leave. (294) So strong had the fortress' defenses been entrenched against enemy attack both by nature and by human hands.





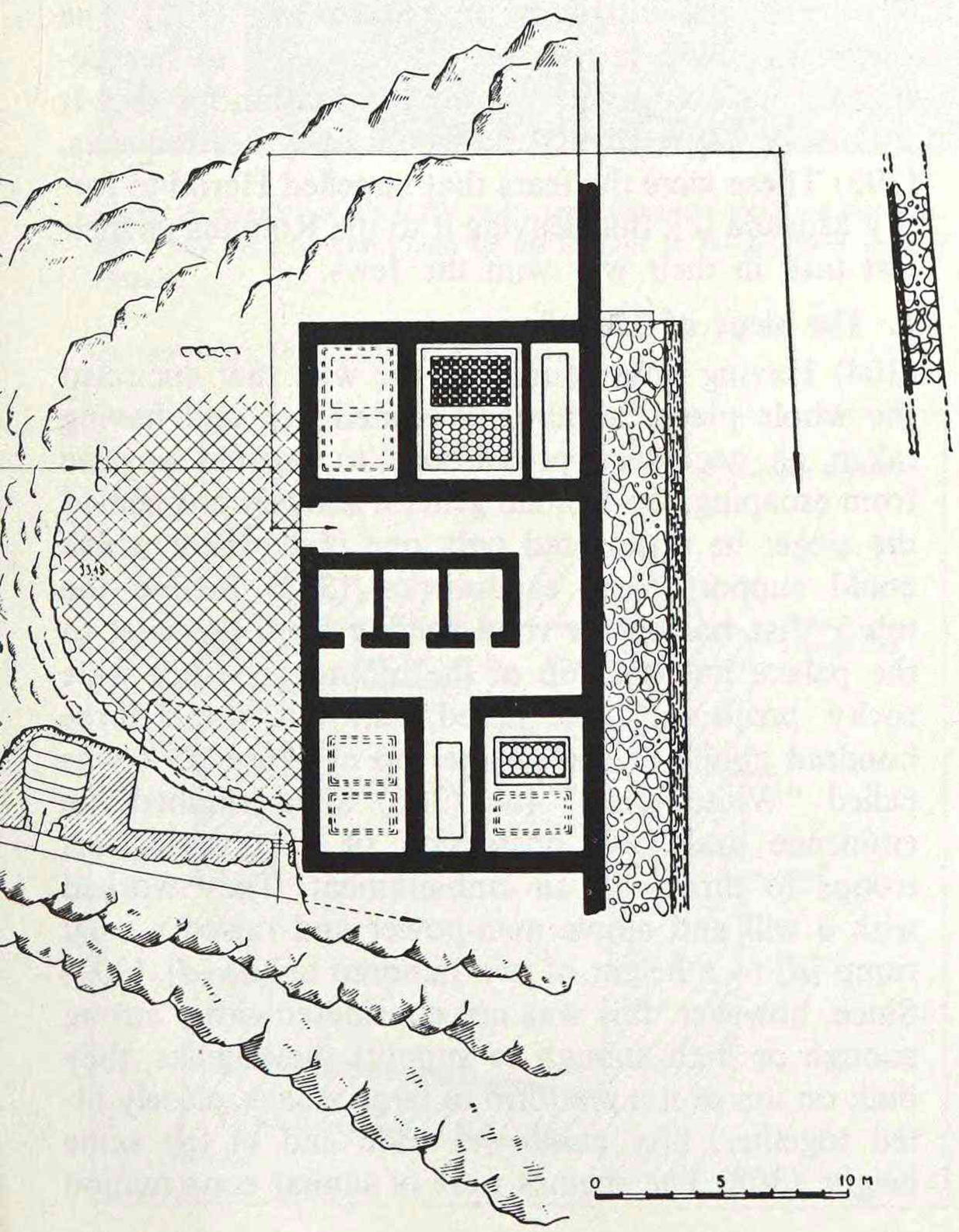
Plan of the Western Palace

290[*b*] *Stones of varied hues* The principal purpose of the artists was to give the lower part of the plastered halls the appearance of being panelled in stone and marble (as illustrated by Y. Yadin). "The artists' efforts to produce a likeness to real marble tablets apparently succeeded, at least to the extent of convincing Josephus, who recorded accounts transmitted to him, namely, that the walls of the buildings were panelled in that material" (*ibid.*, pp. 46–47). Finally, the construction of the terraces described in above notes 289[*c*] and 290[*a*] was carried out by means of a most impressive series of retaining walls that literally overhung an abyss. All of this conveyed even to people who had not reached the top of the rock an impression that this northern palace was the famed Herodian architectural wonder on Masada.

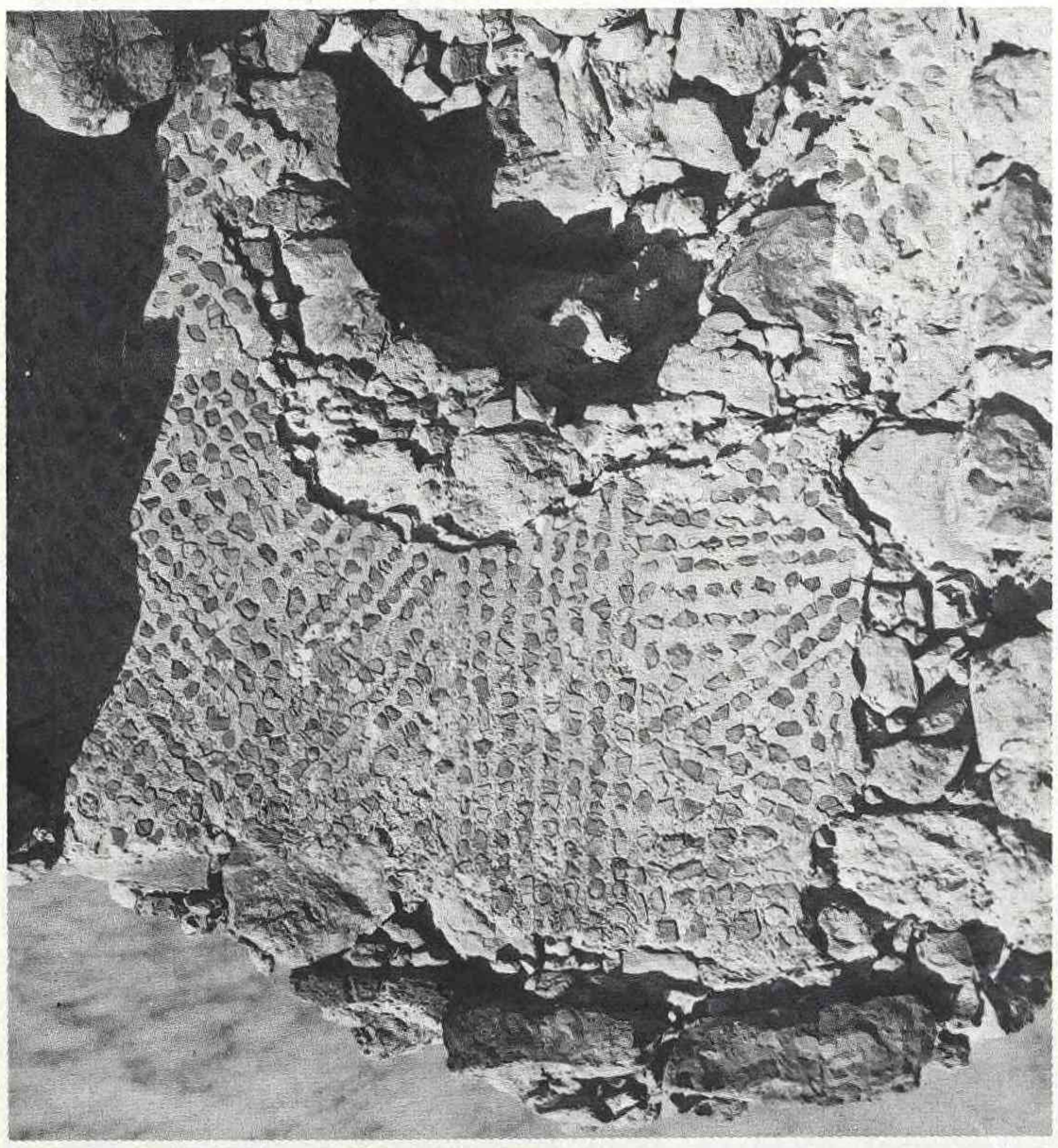
292[*a*] *A sunken road* This was actually a further flight of steps (partly preserved) that led down to the lower terrace, some 15 m. below the middle one (see previous note). It held a splendid reception hall, 15 by 15 m., embellished with plasters and surrounded by painted Corinthian capitals. To the east of it, on the edge of the cliff, was built a small bathhouse with a hypocaust to heat the water. The whole palace was adorned with mosaic pavements in black and white; its walls, with stucco and frescoes. The decorations, wall paintings, and original plaster were preserved and thus kept "on the spot" in their original location, by an ingenious duplicating technique, to illustrate the grandeur with which Herod invested his magnificent palace (*ibid.*, pp. 42–52). The northern palace was excluded from the encircling wall for constructional and tactical reasons and thus, once again, Josephus' account, according to reports that were transmitted to him, conforms to archaeological reality. Furthermore, the "sunken road" he refers to was the winding flight of steps visible from the bottom of the rock to people who had not been to Masada in former decades and could only transmit to Josephus what was visible from below.

293[*b*] *Eastern route, as stated* Cf. 282[*c*], the "snake."

293[*c*] *A thousand cubits* Approximately 480 m. These measurements are accurate if they refer to the height of Masada's western edge of the mountain as the distance between the summit at this point and the bottom of the dry wadi below. This was clearly visible from Silva's headquarters in camp F (see note 277[*d*] above), and Josephus' figure may therefore have stemmed from a Roman source.



Detail of Herodian wall plastering



296[a] *Stored here* A large block of long, rectangular, narrow halls without openings, close to the northern palace described. It contained fifteen storerooms averaging 40 by 4 m., whose double rows of stone walls were covered with gray plaster.

297[b] *Masters of the fortress* Cf. *War* II, 208; 433.

297[c] *A hundred years* The period from the 30s BC to AD 74.

298[d] *Foul pollution* Probably meaning, in his estimation, emanating from below. The weather at the top is desert-dry, and this accounts for the remarkable state of preservation of the relics unearthed by Y. Yadin's expedition.

300[a] *Their former dynasty* The Hasmonean prince Antigonus whose deadly struggle against the young Herod is related in *War* I, 250 ff.; 317 ff.

300[b]–301[b] *Cleopatra* Who around 34 BC coveted Judea and plotted against Herod (I, 349–367; 389–391). Thus Herod probably began building his fortress before 31 BC.

303[c] *To fortify Masada* Scholars have not always supported this thesis of Josephus, believing that Herod meant to incorporate Masada into the general strategic defense of his kingdom. Y. Yadin thinks otherwise: "Josephus was certainly right in arguing that Masada was turned into a personal royal citadel and not an ordinary fortification. This alone explains that in addition to the walls and storehouses, necessary to all citadels, the principal feature of Masada's complex of buildings are two palaces, one more magnificent than the other... It is evident, therefore, that Herod prepared Masada as a refuge for himself and family... For Herod, at least, Masada was a royal citadel" (*ibid.*, p. 16). B. Mazar has also drawn attention to the fact that other Jewish princes beside Herod built themselves fortresses in remote districts of Judaea in line with Hellenistic custom when they felt that their rule could be challenged and their household threatened. Living examples are the fortresses of Hyrcania, Alexandrion (Sartaba) built by Alexander Jannaeus in the lower Jordan valley and, earlier still, Doq by the earlier Hasmonean princes (*War* I, 56).

304[a] *Already related* Cf. VII, 276 ff.

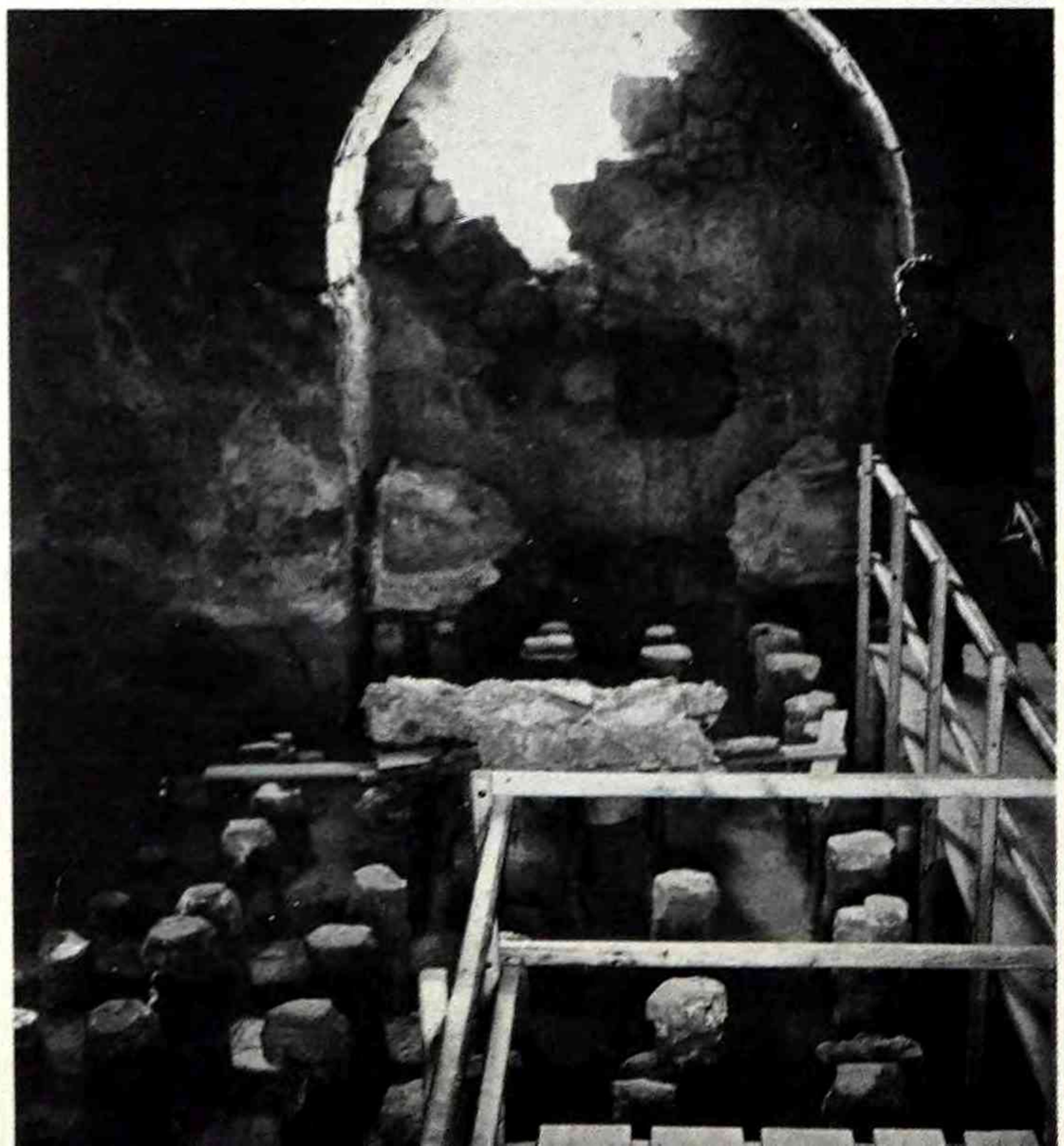
305[b] *300 cubits* Approximately 150 m.

305[c] *"White [cliff]"* A promontory.

306[d] *A solid ramp* The ramp was built as an assault embankment by the Romans on the western slope of Masada, rising towards the casemate wall just north of the west gate. It is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable of the Roman siege structures that exist in the world today and is still in a good state of preservation. All visitors to Masada are struck by the whiteness of the ramp; as most of the earth had been taken from the white promontory that may be seen in the area today on the very site described by Josephus. 250 cubits—approximately 100 m.

307[e] *Fifty cubits* Approximately 25 m.

The steam room of the Masada bath; tiny pillars supported the floor of the steam room



4. The provisions stored by Herod found in perfect condition

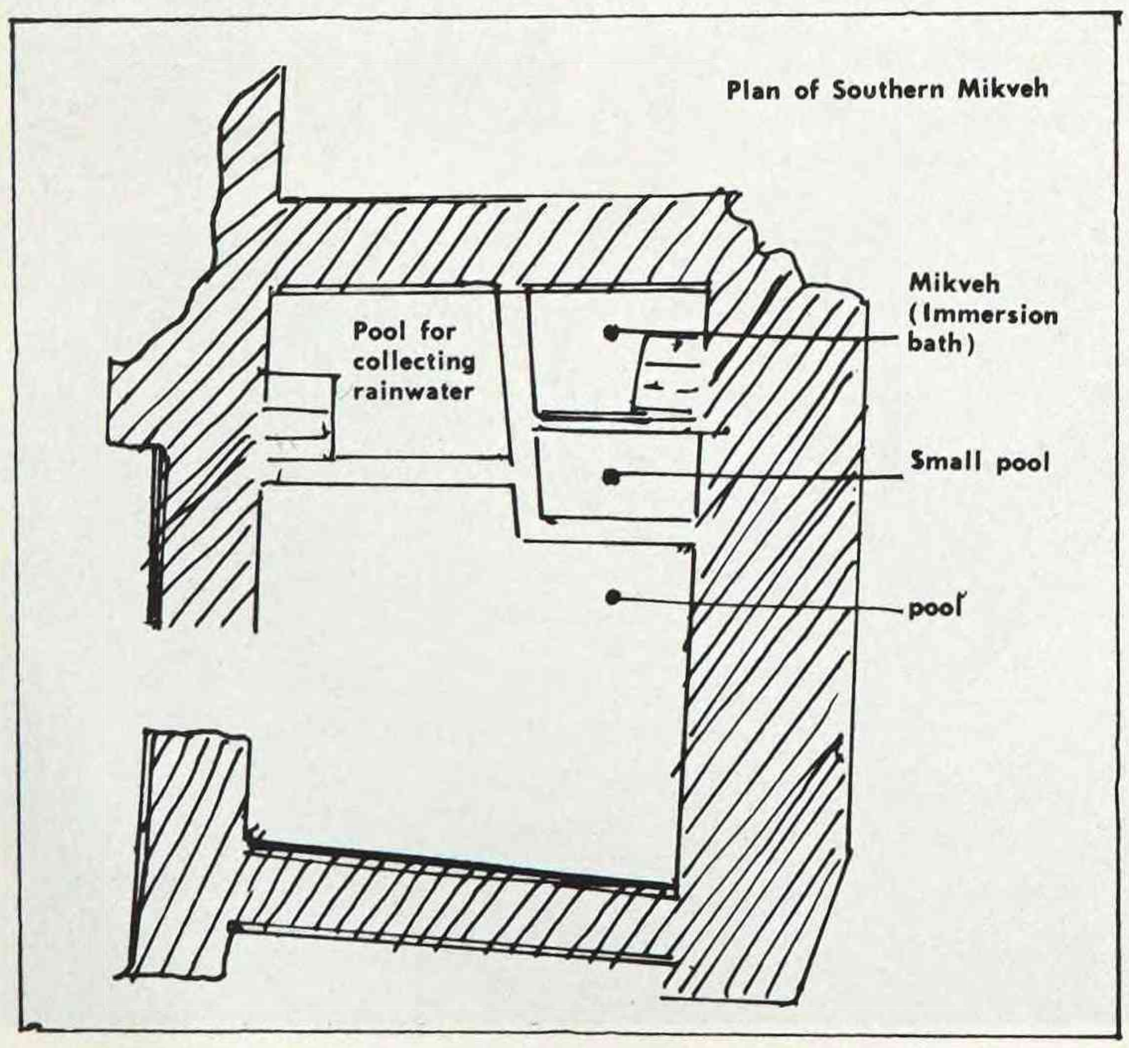
(295) The provisions laid up inside were even more astonishing in their abundance as well as their perfect preservation. (296) The stores included a large quantity of wheat that had been stored here [*a*], enough to last for many years, and an abundance of wine and oil, every kind of pulse, and dates in great piles. (297) All these Eleazar and his Sicarii found in perfect condition when, by a trick, they made themselves masters of the fortress [*b*] and just as good as provisions recently laid in; yet from the date of storage to the capture by the Romans a hundred years [*c*] had elapsed. In fact, the Romans found the fruits that remained undecayed. (298) It would not be wrong to attribute their preservation to the atmosphere, which at the altitude of the citadel is untainted by any earthly foul pollution [*d*]. (299) There was found too a cache of arms of every description, stored there by the king and enough for ten thousand men, as well as unwrought iron, bronze, and lead. There was indeed very strong reasons for these preparations; (300) for it is said that Herod equipped this fortress as a refuge for himself, suspecting a double danger: peril on the one hand from the Jewish people, who might dethrone him and restore to power their former dynasty [*a*] and the greater and more serious danger from Cleopatra [*b*], the queen of Egypt. (301) For she never concealed her intention but constantly appealed to Antony, urging him to destroy Herod and pleading that he transfer to herself the kingdom of Judaea [*b*]. (302) The surprising thing is that he did not yield to her demands, enslaved as he was by his passion for her. It was to be expected that he would obey her requests. (303) These were the fears that impelled Herod to fortify Masada [*c*], thus leaving it to the Romans as their last task in their war with the Jews.

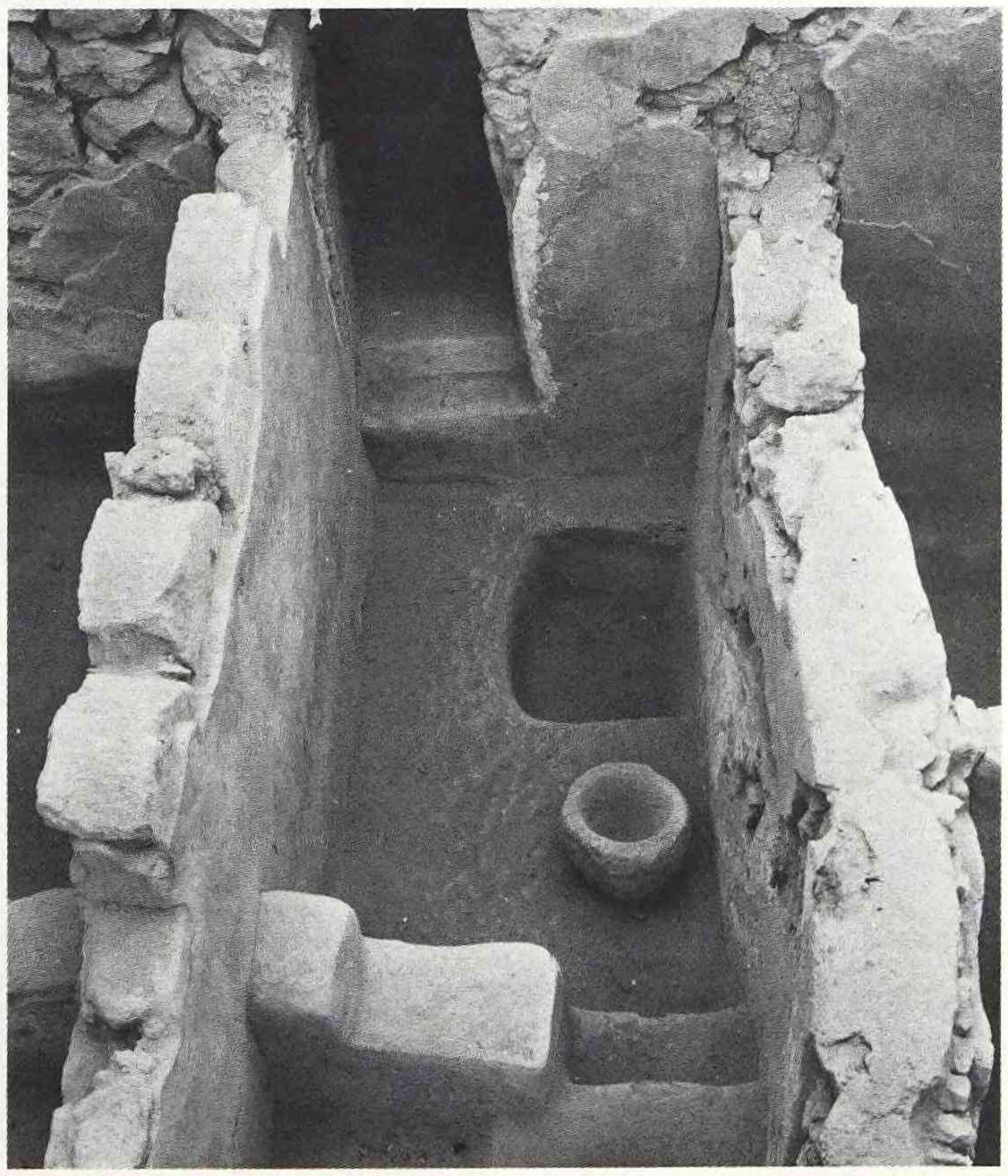
5. The siege of Masada

(304) Having now completed the wall that encircled the whole place, as already related [*a*], and having taken all necessary precautions to prevent anyone from escaping, the Roman general actively prosecuted the siege; he discovered only one place there which could support siege earthworks. (305) Behind the tower that barred the road leading from the west to the palace and the top of the mountain, lay a wide rocky projection that jutted out, but stood three hundred cubits [*b*] below the top of Masada; it was called "White [cliff]" [*c*]. (306) Silva climbed the eminence and took possession of it, ordering his troops to throw up an embankment. They worked with a will and ample man-power and raised a solid ramp [*d*] to a height of two hundred cubits [*d*]. (307) Since, however, this was not considered either strong enough or high enough to support the engines, they built on top of it a platform of large stones, closely fitted together, fifty cubits [*e*] wide and of the same height. (308) The engines were of similar construction

Above: A complex of pools for collecting rainwater, plastered conduits, and ritual bath (mikveh) *built by the Zealots in the southern wall of Masada*

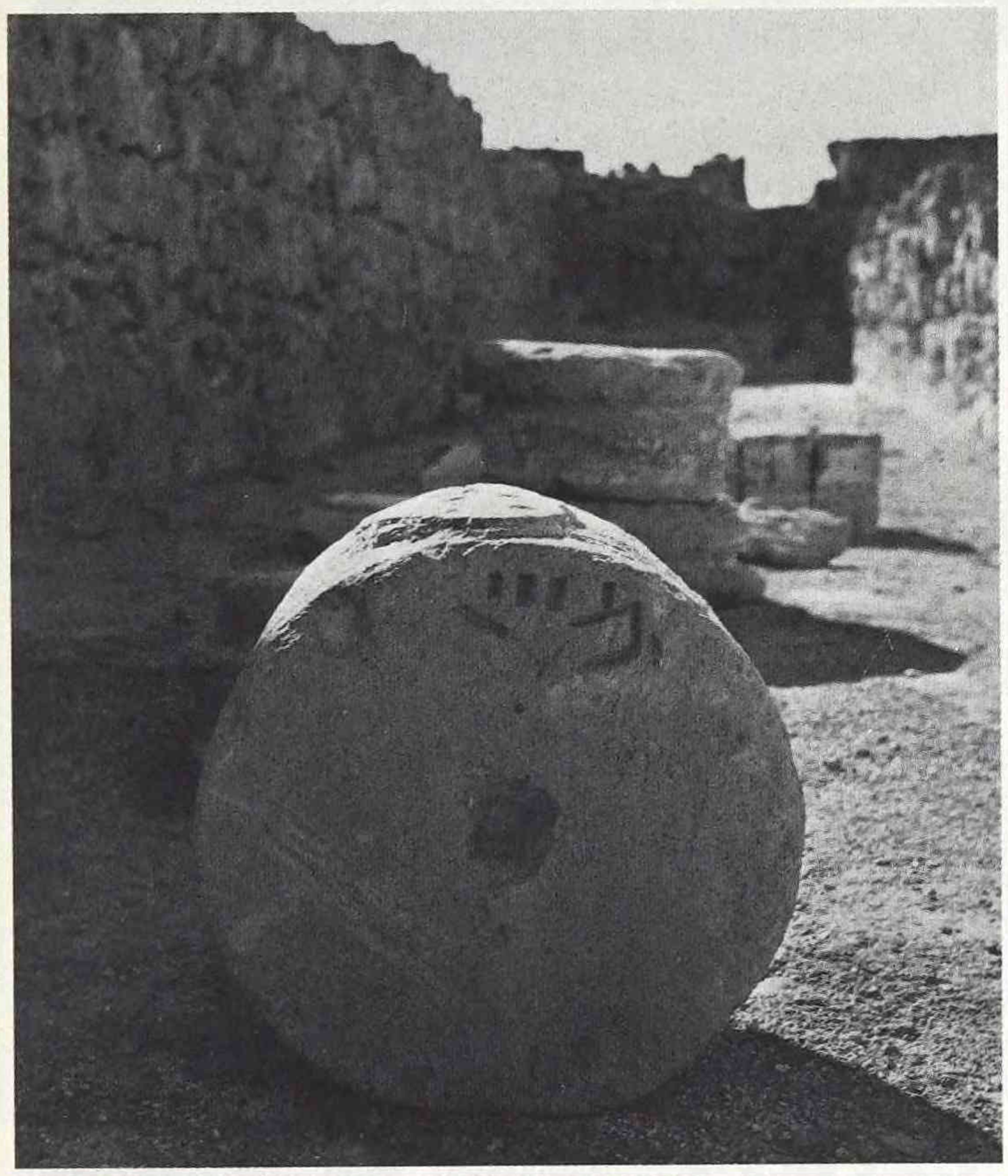
On the right: The interior of a mikveh



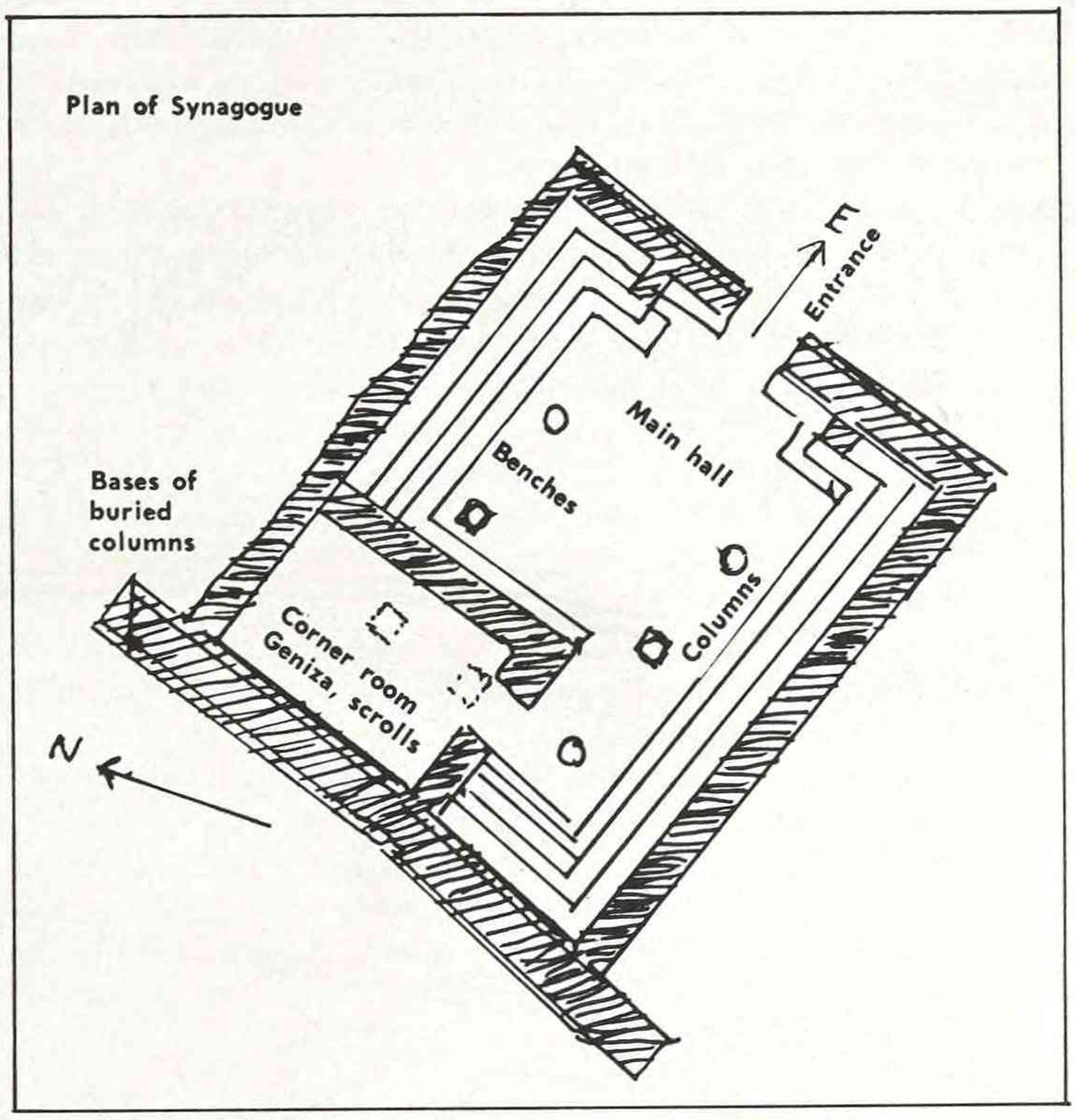


Looking south and above (the stepped palace) at the complex of storerooms after their reconstruction. One of the storerooms has been left unexcavated to show conditions before excavation. Hundreds of crushed storage jars were recovered from the magazines; many were reconstructed after being unearthed. It will be noted that the Masada archaeological expedition was more of a clearance and reconstruction nature, effected on surface-rock, rather than a stratified excavation of a tel

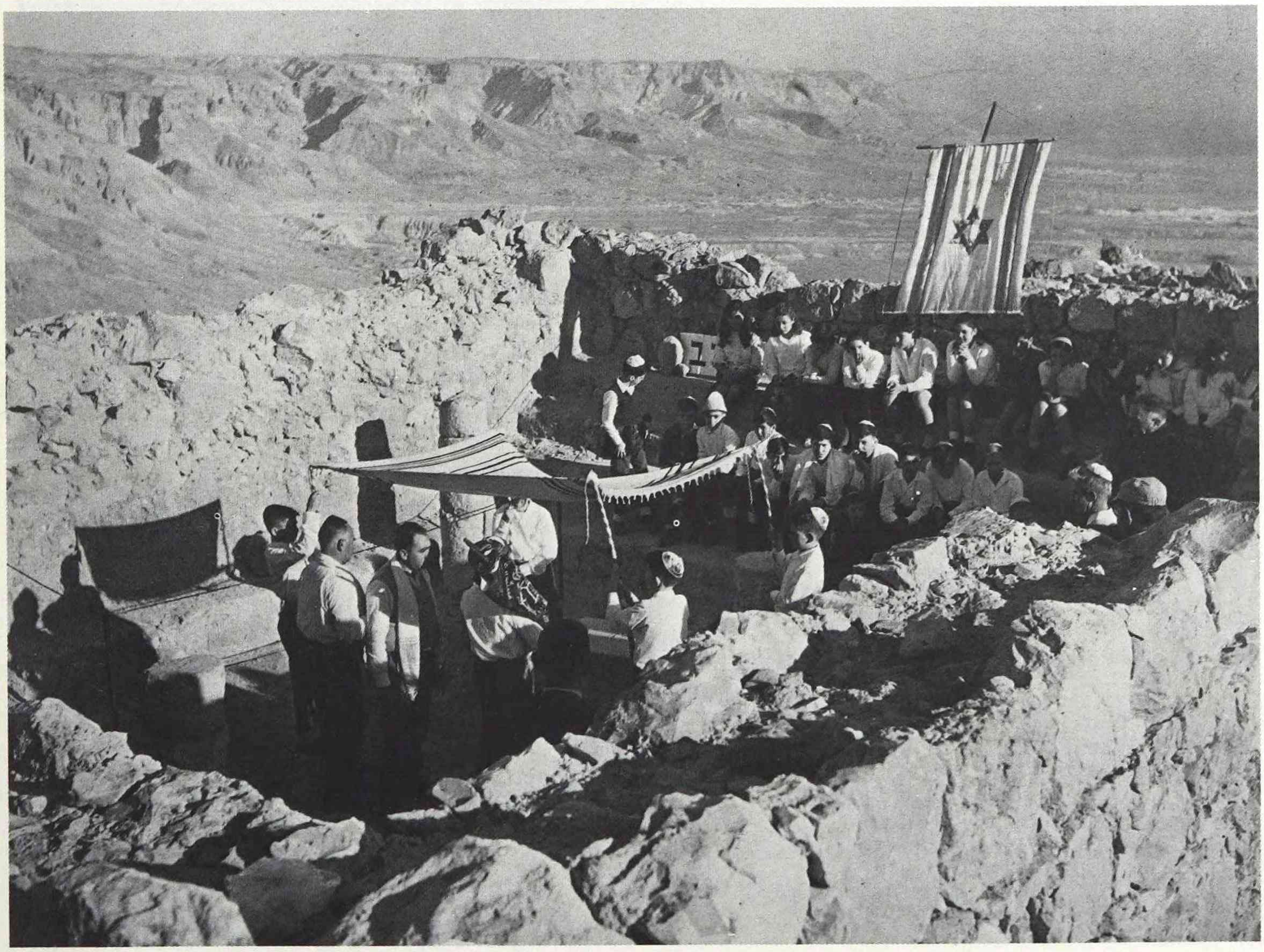
The swimming-pool building



The tall pillars were built by superimposing stone cylinders; they were marked with identifying serial Hebrew letters to guide the builders



The ancient synagogue along the western wall was simplicity itself, as shown in the plan. A geniza, *or reliquary of scrolls, was found at the back. Because of its inspirational character, the site has become a favorite place to celebrate the Bar-Mitzva initiation ceremonies of thirteen-year-old Jewish boys*



to those formerly devised by Vespasian and later by Titus for their siege operations. (309) Furthermore [*a*], a tower was erected sixty cubits high [*a*] and entirely covered with iron plates from which the Romans, with missile volleys from many quick-firers and *ballistae*, drove off the defenders on the ramparts and forced them to keep under cover. (310) Simultaneously, Silva, having had a great battering ram constructed, ordered it to be swung continually against the wall, and with difficulty breached a part of the wall and overthrew it [*b*]. (311) The Sicarii, however, had quickly rebuilt another wall inside that which would likely suffer less from the engines; it was pliant and capable of breaking the impetus of the blows because of the following construction: (312) Huge beams were laid lengthwise and fastened together at their ends; these were in two parallel rows a wall's breadth apart, with the space between filled with earth. (313) And in order to prevent the earth from falling out as the mound rose, they laid beams transversely to fix firmly those that lay longitudinally. (314) This construction presented to the enemy the appearance of normal masonry, but the blows of the battering rams on yielding earth were weakened while the concussion settled the earth together and helped to solidify it.

Destruction of the wall by fire

(315) Seeing this, Silva considered it easier to destroy the wall by fire, and instructed his men to direct a volley of burning torches at it. (316) Because it was made mostly of wood, it soon caught fire, and due to its hollow construction, the whole volume was soon ignited and it blazed up in a mass of flame. (317) Just as the fire broke out, a north wind, which blew in the face of the Romans, alarmed them considerably; it diverted the flame from above and swept it against them; and as their engines seemed likely to burn up [*a*], they felt hopeless. (318) Then the wind suddenly veered to the south as if by divine providence [*b*], and blowing strongly in the opposite direction [*c*], carried and flung the flames against the wall and turned it into a blazing mass from top to bottom. (319) The Romans, with God on their side, returned to camp full of delight, determined to attack the enemy the next day, and throughout the night the guards kept more vigilant watch to ensure that none of the besieged should secretly escape.

6. Eleazar's first address

(320) Eleazar, however, intended neither to slip out nor to allow anyone else to do so. (321) Seeing the wall going up in flames and being unable to devise any further means of escape or heroic resistance, he foresaw clearly what the Romans would do to the men, the women and children if they won, and he thought that death was preferable for all. (322) Deciding that this was the best course under the circumstances, he assembled his toughest companions and urged it upon them in the following address:

309[*a*] *Furthermore* Whereas Vespasian had erected three siege towers 15 m. high at Jotapata (III, 284), Silva's tower rose to a height of 30 m. These measurements are exaggerated due to an optical illusion for anyone looking at them from below.

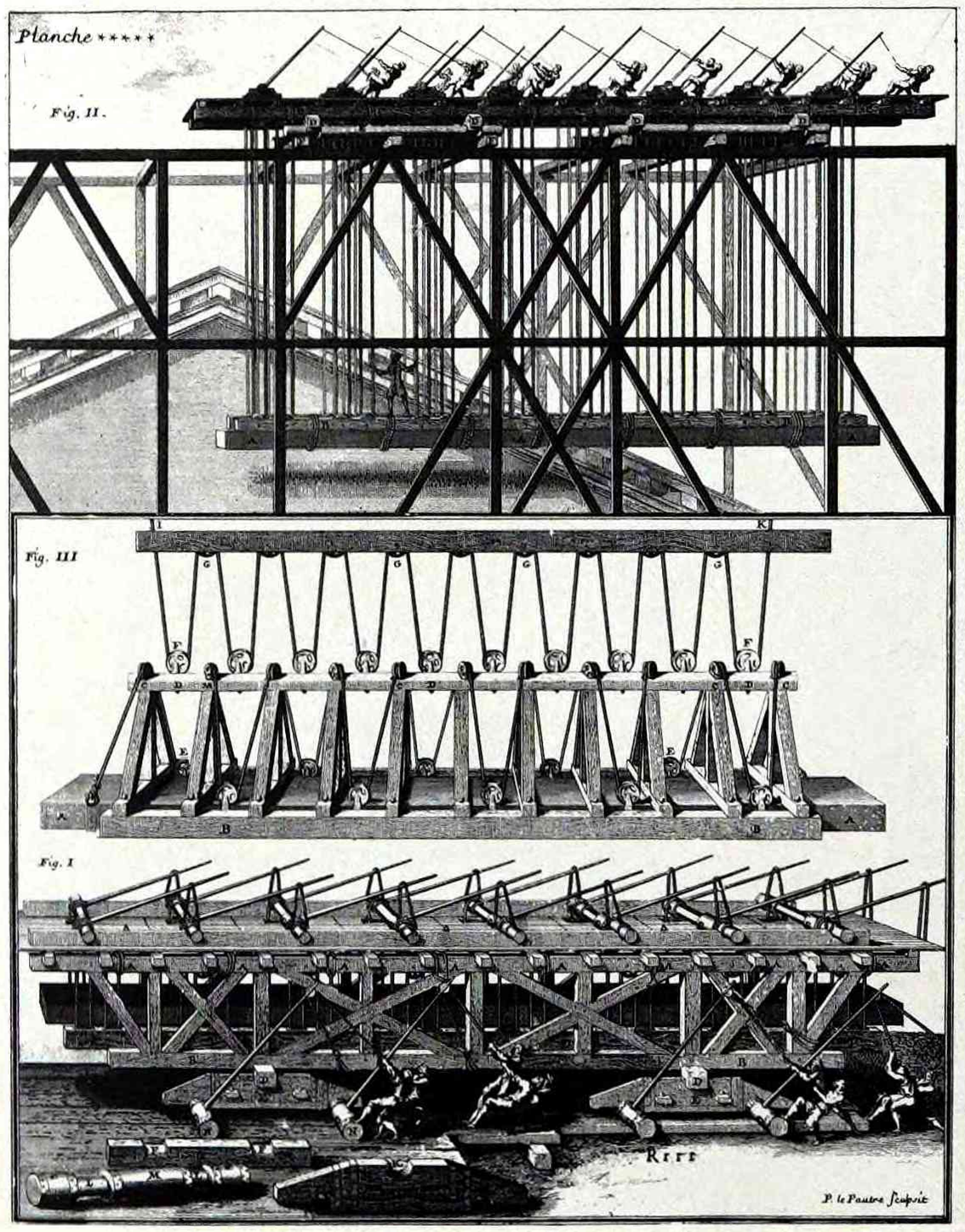
310[*b*] *Overthrew it* The powerful work and material that went into raising the Roman assault embankment enabled the high siege tower to be set up on top of it and the battering ram, which had a superstructure with additional catapults, to be hauled up. The breach in the wall was effected directly above the assault embankment. "To this day, as our excavations showed, the section of the casemate-wall at this spot is missing" (Y. Yadin, *ibid.*, p. 222). Moreover, as Josephus was not present, he could not report on any Zealot counteraction to match the enemy's frontal attack with battering ram and volleys of covering fire from the archers.

317[*a*] *To burn* The framework of the battering ram was made of wood, and this accounts for the comparative ease with which it could be raised to the top of the siege tower.

318[*b*] *Divine providence* Josephus relates another "providential" veering of the wind at the siege of Gamla (*War* IV, 76).

318[*c*] *Opposite direction* From south to north. The sudden veering of winds is common in the Dead Sea valley, at the edge of which stands Masada; the providential factor mentioned is, of course, only Josephus' interpretation.

The three sections of this engine (from Vitruvius' treatise on architecture and engineering), namely I, II, III, could help to explain the operation of the high-rise ballista *that was used to hurl the stones missiles from the height of the "White cliff"*



The western ascent to the "white cliff" over which Silva erected his siege engines

Reconstruction of the protective hides that covered the Roman siege engines

(323) "Long since, my brave companions, we determined to serve neither the Romans nor anyone else but only God, for He alone is the true and righteous Lord of men; now the time has come that bids us prove our resolution by our deeds. (324) At this crisis we must not disgrace ourselves; up till now we have never submitted to slavery even if it involved no danger; in choosing slavery now we would deliberately accept the horrible penalties that await us if we fall alive into Roman hands. For as we were the first of all to revolt, so are we the last to fight against them. (325) Moreover, I think it is God who has granted us this privilege, that it is in our power to die bravely in freedom—unlike others who were unexpectedly defeated. (326) It is evident that tomorrow we will be captured, but we are free to choose an honorable death together with those we love most. Our enemies cannot prevent this though they fervently pray to take us alive; nor can we defeat them in battle. (327) Perhaps from the very first, when we were bent on freedom, but suffered such hard treatment from one another—and worse from our enemy—we ought to have read God's purpose and realized that His once beloved Jewish race had been doomed to extinction. (328) For if He had remained gracious or only slightly indignant with us, He would not have shut His eyes to such wholesale destruction or have abandoned His holy city to be burnt to the ground by our enemies. (329) And did we really hope that of all the Jewish race we alone would come through safe, still in possession of our freedom, as if we were guiltless before God and had taken part in no crime—we who had been the teachers of all the others [*a*]? (330) Now, see how He

329[*a*] *Teachers of all the others* Eleazar ben Jair, scion of the ancient patriotic dynasty of Judas the Gaulanite (or the Galilean cf. 233[*d*] above) proclaimed himself the torch bearer of Zealotic idealism and undying love of liberty. The defenders of Masada were not only Zealots from the national political point of view, but they also lived rigidly according to the religious code, strictly adhering to such commandments as tithing (putting aside the share of the priests) despite harsh conditions of life at Masada" (*ibid.*, p. 95).

332[*b*] Cf. 311 ff.

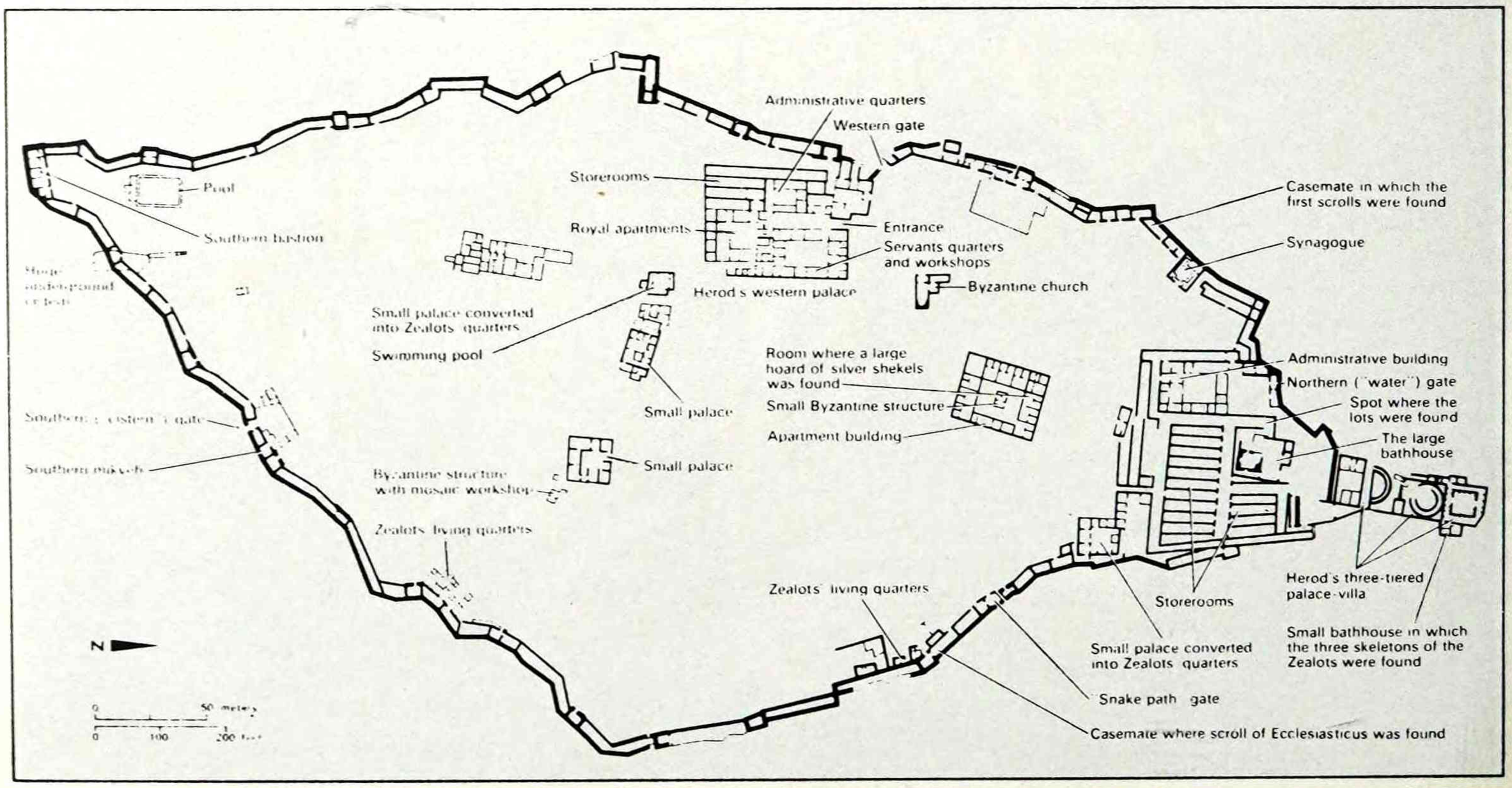
333[*c*] *Our madness* That is to say, "We really deluded ourselves." Admittedly, Josephus' own philosophy of history, as generally expressed throughout, is also reflected in Eleazar's speeches, though in an attenuated form. But the two speeches bear also the burden of Eleazar's fighting idealism and the credo of Jewish freedom ideology, entertained with the expression of the desperate situation in which he and the community found themselves. This tragic plight, as related further, was originally conveyed by the surviving old woman (399–401; see comment in note 404[*e*]) and Josephus edited this account to sound, so to speak, as it could have been said. At this stage he no longer had to worry about Roman censorship when he spoke of the Sicarii with such sympathy (the reason will be found in our note 377[*b*]).

334[*a*] *Wives die undishonored* This is expressed more emphatically in 377.

336[*b*] *Through want* Most stores of victuals were not burned, in order to show the Romans that the defenders died by their own free choice and not because of lack of food. "In order to achieve their purpose, the Zealots did not leave all their stores of food to the Romans. It was enough for them to leave one or two rooms with untouched victuals to show that they had not died through lack of food" (*ibid.*, p. 95). They also left behind vast numbers of coins as they were of no use to the Romans.

339[*a*] *Whimpers and laments* The macabre night was beset by heart-wrenching scenes and possibly some violent discussion. Eleazar rose to the occasion by delivering a still more fervent address.

Diagram plan of Masada



shows us the folly of our hopes, plunging us into more dire distress than we could have anticipated. (331) For not even the impregnability of this fortress has sufficed to save us; and though we have food stores in abundance, piles of arms, and more than enough of every other necessity, yet manifestly God Himself has deprived us of all hope of deliverance. (332) For the flames that were carried back into the enemy lines did not turn back of their own accord towards the wall we constructed [*b*]; (333) no, all these things signify God's vengeance for the many wrongs that we dared to inflict on our countrymen in our madness [*c*]. For these crimes let us pay the penalty not to our bitterest foes, the Romans, but to God—by our own hands! It will be easier to bear His judgment than theirs. (334) Let our wives die undishonored [*a*] and our children without knowing slavery; and when they are gone, let us do each other an ungrudging kindness, preserving our liberty as a noble funeral monument. (335) But first let us destroy our belongings and the fortress by fire; for the Romans, I know, will be grieved to lose our persons and all their gain at the same time. (336) Let us spare only one thing—our store of food; for it will testify when we are dead, that we did not perish through want [*b*] but because, in keeping with our initial resolution, we chose death to slavery."

7. Eleazar's renewed appeal ineffective

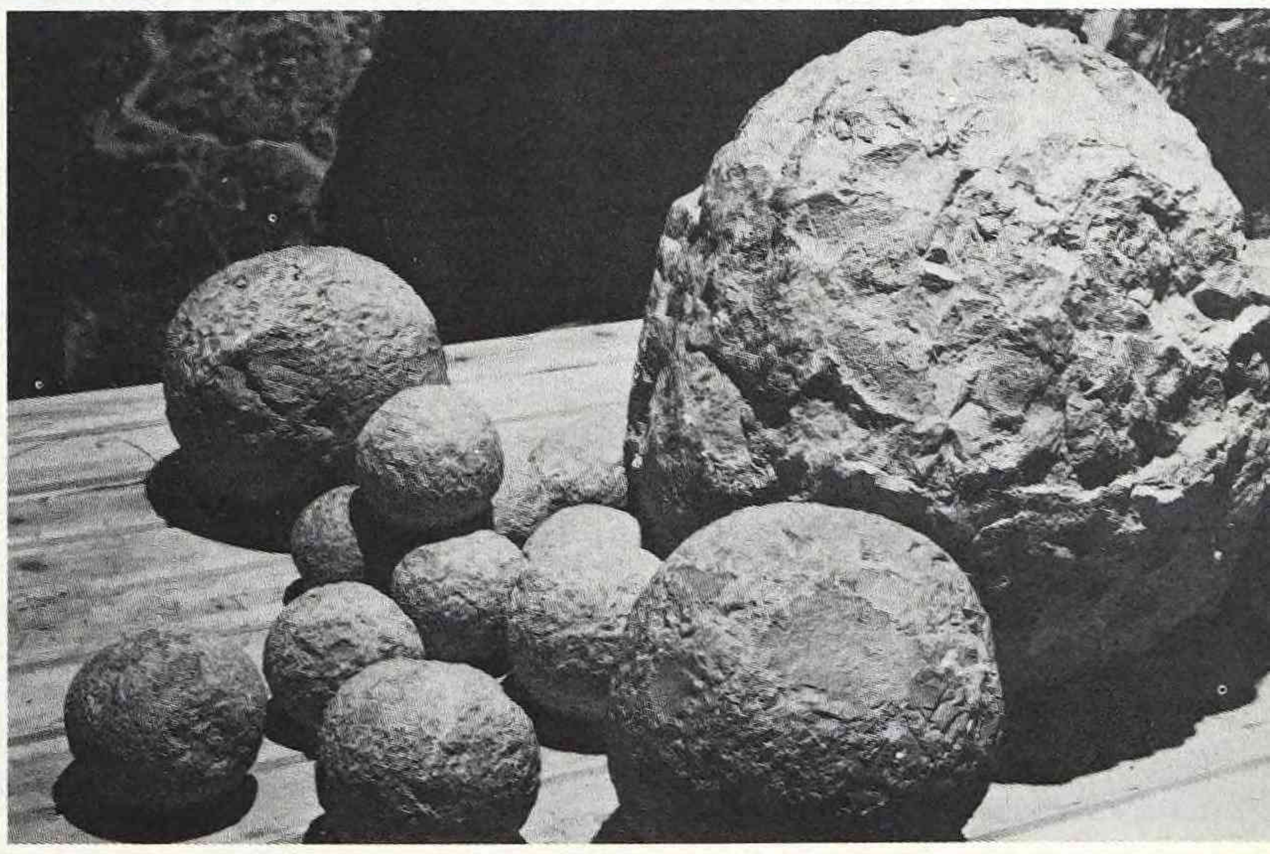
(337) Such was Eleazar's appeal; but it did not meet with the same response from all his hearers. Some, indeed, were eager to do as he said and were almost happy at the thought of such a noble death; (338) but others, more tender-hearted, were moved by pity for their wives and families, and also no doubt by the clear prospect of their own demise; their tears as they exchanged glances, betrayed their unwilling hearts. (339) When Eleazar saw them flinch and their courage break down before his great plan, he feared lest their whimpers and laments [*a*] might unman even those who had listened to him bravely. (340) So instead of abandoning his exhortations, he roused himself to still greater fervor and pursued a more dazzling display of oratory on the immortality of the soul [*b*]. In fierce rebuke and looking hard at those in tears, he said: (341) "I was greatly mistaken in thinking that I had brave companions in our struggles for freedom, men resolved to live honorably or die. (342) But I find that you are not in the least different from the common herd in boldness and courage, you who fear death even when it will save you the greatest misery, a cause in which you ought not to hesitate for a moment or wait for someone to advise you. (343) For from old, since the first dawn of intelligence [*c*], we have been continually impressed by those ancestral and divine precepts—supported by the actions and spirit of our forefathers—that life is man's misfortune, not death [*d*]. (344) For death gives freedom to our soul and lets

340[*b*] The concept of *immortality* was not stated formally in Old Testament times even though it influenced people's thinking, but it was clearly emphasized in the following period: When the spirit of life had departed, man continued to live in the land of the shadows, but "the dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go into silence" (Ps. 115, 17). On the other hand, the soul is regarded as an immaterial substance, related to the body in a more or less incidental way. According to this view, existence before birth and after death is a matter of course, and it is the soul's descent into matter and the mortal body that requires explanation. The moral and religious task of the life of a Jew is then to protect the soul from losing its purity while in the material world. These ideas were already current in Hellenistic times (i.e., after Old Testament days) and appear as commonplace in later Tannaitic and Talmudic literature. The Pharisees in particular declared that after death every soul appears before the celestial tribunal on the Day of Judgment and that the soul of the righteous is then compensated for its suffering in the "present world." In other words, later Judaism, which did not elaborate a new doctrine in this respect, was content to draw its own conclusions on immortality considering the divine origin and the nobility of man's soul, as stated emphatically in Genesis 1, 27; 2, 7. The doctrine of the hereafter *(olam-hābā),* with its glorified celestial rewards, helped reconcile even the unsophisticated masses with suffering in this world and aided them in resisting strong outside temptations, suffering, and doubt in the people's destiny. In *War* III, 374–375, Josephus speaks of the most holy place in heaven (Paradise, Garden of Eden) allotted to the righteous, and the darker regions of the nether world (Gehenna) assigned to the wicked.

343[*c*] *First dawn of intelligence* Probably referring to the temptation and original sin.

343[*d*] *Life... misfortune* Meaning life on this earth, with its problems and temptations and not afterlife, which he went on to describe at great length.

The rough stone was one of those that the besieged Zealots hurled at the Romans. The smaller round stones were the Roman ballista *stones hurled from the high tower outside*



348[*a*] *So abundant is her immortality* Eleazar's eloquent declarations about the tension between body and soul seem to go beyond current popular beliefs, such as the one expressed by Josephus in *War* II, 163 or III, 374. But in some ways it also bears affinities to Essene attitudes, which Eleazar probably knew about in view of the discovery of a sectarian (i.e., a non-Scriptural) scroll at Masada, the text of which bears analogy with the tenor of the Dead Sea Scrolls of Qumran (cf. *War* II, 120–161). Some scholars have suggested that Sicarii Zealots occupying Masada could be identified directly or indirectly with the Qumran sectaries, or that the Essenes of Qumran participated in the great revolt against the Romans and then found shelter at Masada. Other scholars are inclined to believe that many of the words attributed by Josephus to Eleazar about the immortality of the soul were not really native to the Sicarii, Zealots, or other contemporary Jews, but bore the stamp of Hellenistic philosophy akin to that expressed in Plato's *Phaedon* concerning the tension between body and soul and the philosophical implications derived from that tension. Josephus interjected them, in this view, to embellish Eleazar's reported address and make it more appealing to his readers, be they Jews or Gentiles. (See scroll fragment illustrated on p. 499.)

349[*b*] *Sleep... consort with God* Referring to dreaming when the soul wanders and receives a divine communication, as in *Genesis* 28, 12–19 or *I Kings* 3, 5. The whole trend of Old Testament teachings and popular beliefs suggests that dreams serve as an avenue of communication with God. In some cases they are cited as genuine communications from God, as in *Job* 33, 15, *Jeremiah* 23, 28, and occasions when God is reverenced, as in Jacob's dream (*Gen.* 28, 12 ff.), as one who reveals the future.

351[*a*] *Philosophy* The Hebrew equivalent would be *hokhma,* as would have been said by Eleazar, but Josephus has interjected a foreign element that could hardly be attractive to a Jewish audience. More likely, they were an allusion from Josephus' own knowledge acquired in Rome, as expressed in his *Contra Apion* I, 179. There he quotes Aristotle, who thought that Jews were descended from, and followed, the doctrines of Indian philosophers, though Josephus knew better.

Aperture dug in a casemate dwelling to hold cooking utensils, jars, mugs, and other utensils

it depart to its own pure abode where it will not experience any calamity; but while it is confined within a mortal body and is affected by its miseries, in strict truth it is dead; for association of the divine with the mortal is unbefitting. (345) It is true that the soul wields great power even when imprisoned in the body, for it makes the latter its instrument of sense, moving it invisibly and directing it onward in its actions further than mortal nature can reach. (346) However, it is not until the soul is freed from the weight that drags it down to earth and is hung about it that it is restored to its proper place; then in truth it partakes of a blessed energy and power unfettered on every side and it remains invisible to human eyes, like God himself. (347) For it is withdrawn from view even while it is in the body; it enters unperceived and it departs unseen, for it is one and incorruptible by nature while causing a change in the body. (348) For whatever the soul touches lives and blossoms, whatever it deserts withers and dies; so abundant is her immortality [*a*].

The analogy of death and sleep

(349) "Take sleep; it provides you with the clearest proof of what I say: In sleep souls, free from distractions of the body and enjoying independence and the most blissful repose, consort with God [*b*] through kingship, go wherever they like, and foretell many of the things to come. (350) So why should we fear death if we welcome repose in sleep? And is it not absurd to pursue freedom in this life and grudge ourselves eternal freedom?

The example of Indian self-immolation

(351) "One would think that we, by our education at home, should give others an example of readiness to die; should we, however, need the testimony of other nations, let us look at those Indians who profess to practice philosophy [*a*]. (352) They are men of true courage, who reluctantly endure life, regarding it as a kind of service they must render to nature, and hasten to release their souls from their bodies; (353) and though no misfortune impels or drives them away, from sheer desire for the immortal state they inform their friends that they are going to depart. No one tries to stop them; everyone congratulates them and each gives them messages for his dear departed; (354) so confidently and so truly sincerely do they believe in the fellowship that souls share with one another. (355) Then, after receiving these commissions, they consign their bodies to the flames that the soul may be completely pure when it is parted from the body and they expire amid hymns. (356) In fact their dearest escort them more happily to their death than other men their fellow citizens when starting on a very long journey; the bereaved may weep for themselves, but the departed they regard as happy, who now have received immortality. (357) And so, are we not

ashamed to show a poorer spirit than Indians, and by our want of courage to bring into contempt the laws of our fathers [*b*], the envy of all mankind?

God's sentence

(358) "Yet, even if from the very first we had been taught the opposite doctrine, that life is indeed man's greatest blessing and that death is a disaster, the situation is such that we are called to bear it with a stout heart, since it is God's will and sheer necessity that doom us to death. (359) Long ago, it seems, God passed this decree [*a*] regarding the whole Jewish race together, that we must depart from this life [*b*] if we do not use it properly. (360) Do not fasten the blame on yourselves, nor give the Romans credit for the fact that we are ruined as a result of the war; for it was not their power that brought us to this pass, but a more powerful cause [*c*] has intervened to give them the semblance of victory [*c*].

The Jewish disaster—whose responsibility?

(361) "And let me ask, what Roman weapons slew the Jews of Caesarea? [*a*] (362) Why, they had never contemplated rebelling against Rome, but were engaged in observing their Sabbath festival when the Caesarean mob rushed at them; though they did not resist, they were massacred with their wives and children, paying no heed to the Romans who regarded none as enemies, except ourselves who had rebelled. (363) But I will be told that the Caesareans had a standing quarrel with the Jews in their midst and siezed that opportunity to vent their old hatred. (364) What then shall we say of the Jews in Scythopolis [*b*] who had the effrontery to wage war on us to please the Greeks, and would not join with us, their kinsmen, to drive out the Romans [*b*]? (365) Much good they got for their faithfulness and loyalty to the men of Scythopolis! They were ruthlessly massacred by them, they and all their families; that was the reward that their alliance brought them! (366) The fate from which they had saved their neighbors from suffering at our hands they brought on their own heads, as if they themselves desired to inflict it! Time would fail me now to speak about every individual instance; (367) for you know there is not a city in Syria [*c*] that has not exterminated its Jewish inhabitants, though more hostile to us than to the Romans. (368) Thus the people of Damascus, though they could not even fake a plausible pretext, deluged their city with the most loathsome slaughter, butchering eighteen thousand [*d*] Jews with their wives and families. (369) As for those tortured to death in Egypt, we were told that their number was apparently more than sixty thousand [*e*]. These Jews perhaps died as they did because they were aliens and could not resist their enemies. But think of all those who in their own territory took up arms against Rome; did they lack anything that could inspire them with hope of certain victory?

357[*b*] *Laws of our fathers* The author has chosen a poor example, namely Indian self-immolation, which Jews knew nothing about, and which was a poor analogy to Jewish ancestral courage. In his search for pathos, the author wandered into strange fields.

359[*a*] *This decree* The speaker may have had in mind a relevant passage of *Lamentations* 4, 16: "The Lord himself has dealt with them; he no longer helps them, for they persecuted the priests and elders who stayed true to God" *(The Living Bible, paraphrased,* 1971), or he may have brought up prophecies of doom which were the common burden of apocalyptic pronouncements of the time.

359[*b*] *Depart from this life* Eleazar's words, as transmitted by Josephus, undoubtedly bear the stamp of contemporary rhetoric in the Roman Empire. Also discernible are features common to Greek philosophy and literature, among them important trends that recognized the legitimacy of suicide; its spread in the upper society of Rome during the Julio-Claudian age is well known (Tacitus, *Annals* XV–XVI).

360[*c*] *A more powerful cause* It is doubtful whether a man such as Eleazar would utter such a defeatist statement, and this sounds more like Josephus' editing.

361[*a*] *Caesarea* In AD 66. Cf. *War* II, 45 ff.

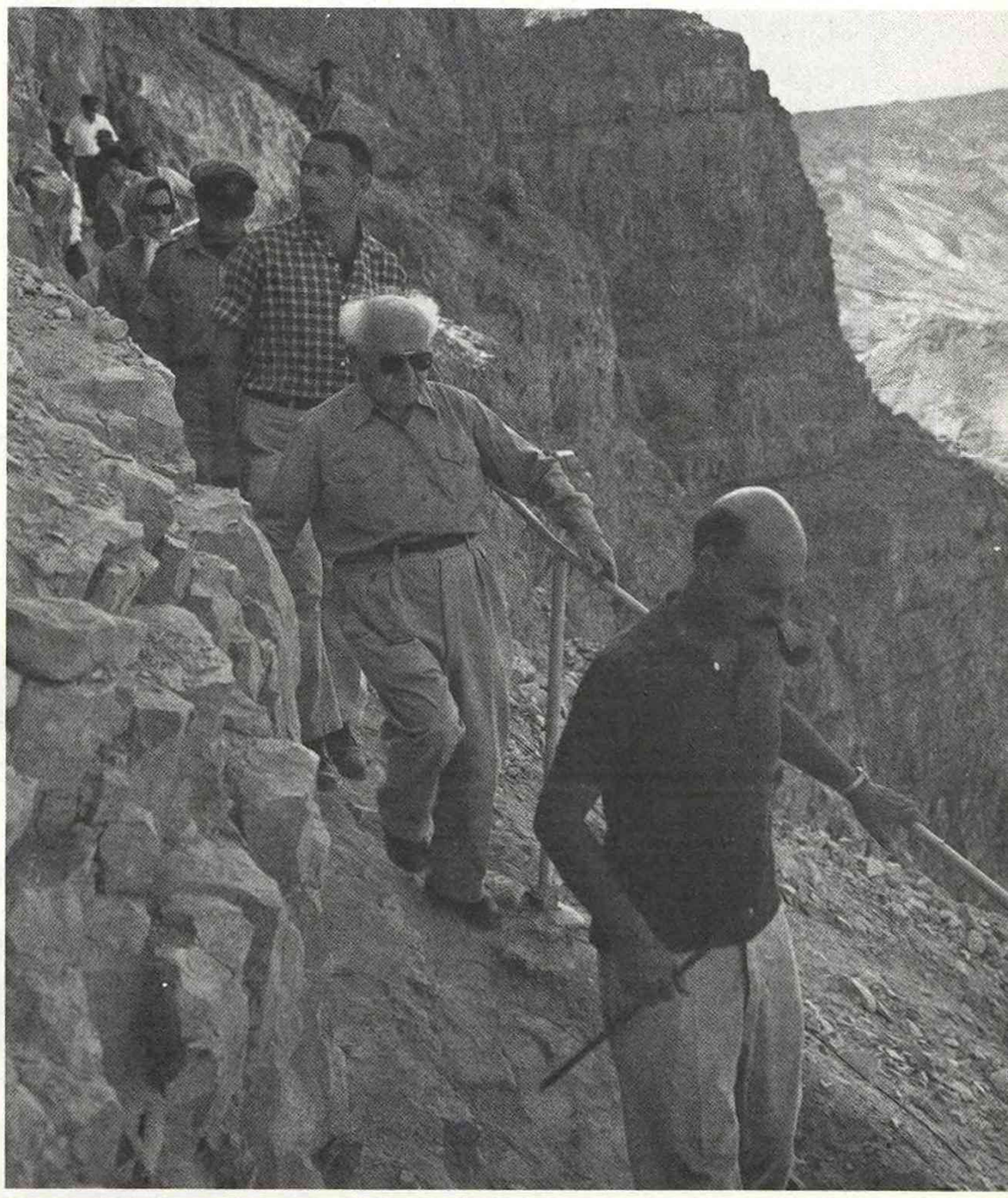
364[*b*] *Scythopolis* Cf. II, 466.

367[*c*] *Syria* According to *Life,* 25, it is evident that the Gentile inhabitants of the cities of the Syrian border had initiated the war with the Jews.

368[*d*] According to *War* II, 561, they were 10,500.

369[*e*] Cf. II, 487 ff. On the whole, it would be surprising if Eleazar, under such terrible stress, would calmly bring up before the tragic assembly all the detail outlined in paras. 363–371. Loud discussions, hysterics, and outcries must surely have been the normal reaction (cf. 339[*a*]). The paragraphs in question may, therefore, be more of Josephus' supplements to make it sound "as it would have appeared."

Professor Y. Yadin (in front), who uncovered Masada, and the late David Ben-Gurion, architect of the State of Israel, near the summit of Masada



377[*a*] *Wretched old men* Long after the debacle and in the centuries immediately following, Jews are known to have come to the site of the ruined Temple to "anoint it with tears," as they tore their garments in grief.

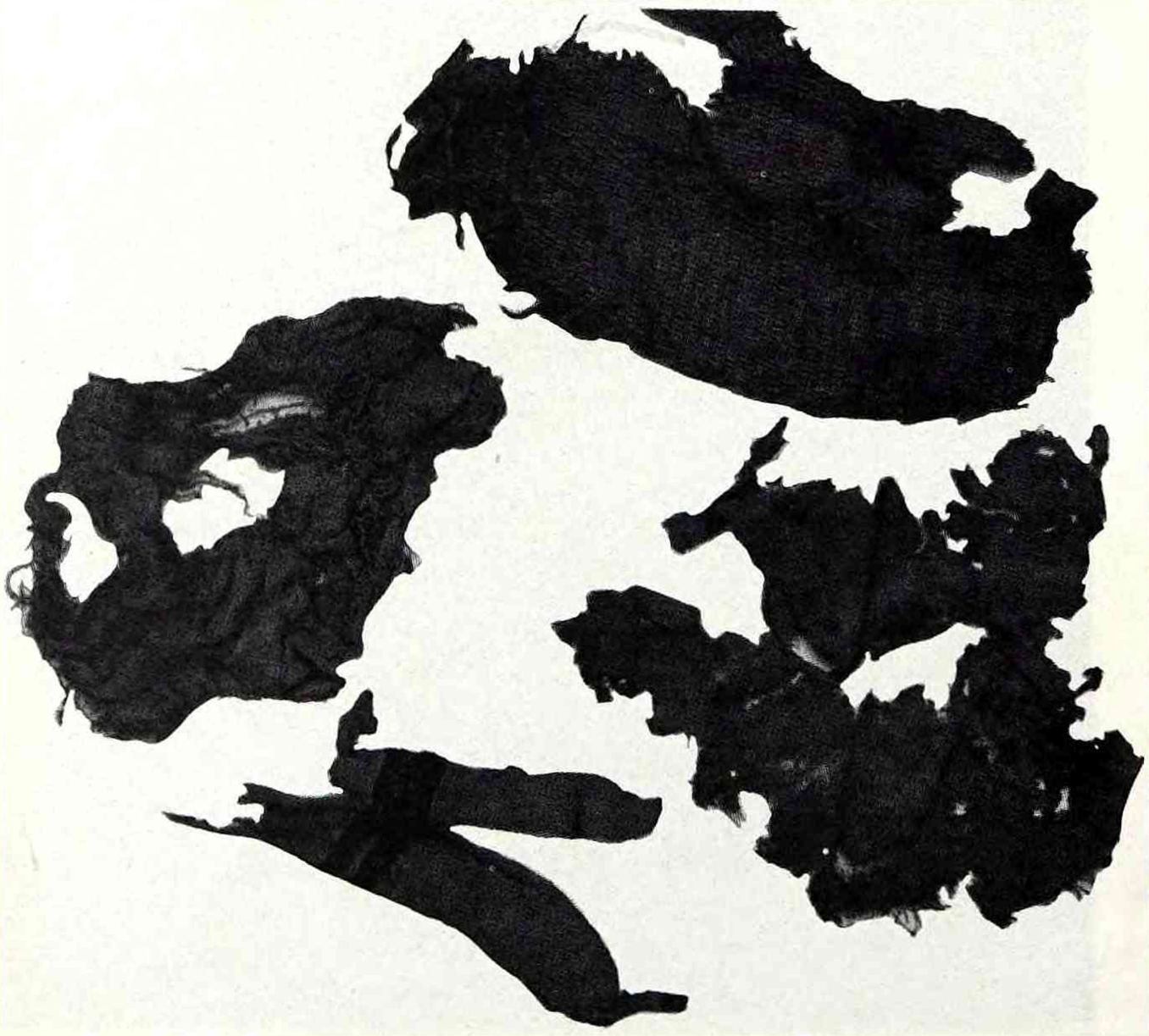
377[*b*] *Basest outrage* We learn that the Romans put the captive women of Jerusalem in brothels, which they set up near their garrison close to the Temple Mount. Later generations gave prominence to the act in the terrible scene depicted in the rabbinic *haggadot* on the dishonor done to the "noble women of Jerusalem." Moreover, wholesale rape was the inevitable accompaniment of Roman (or other) victory, with its consequent tragedies.

378[*c*] *Which of us* At this stage Josephus does not define the Sicarii as "bandits" and he insists on presenting Eleazar in the best possible light and as a genuine patriot, in contrast to the inimical epithets by which he qualified former Zealots. The reason for this may not be hard to find. The Masada community considered no other alternative than total annihilation. Consequently, Josephus, who knew that the Romans would not have left any survivors, would not offend Roman sensibilities if he depicted the episode in his own dramatic vein. In actual fact, he seems to have gathered his report on Masada from some subsequent intelligent woman, or Roman witness (cf. 404[*e*]).

382[*d*] *Refuse to take it* Likewise, the beleaguered people of Jerusalem, under Zealot pressure, had refused Titus' offer (VI, 356 ff.).

388[*e*] *Our fortitude* The whole tenor of the addresses are relevant to Eleazar's personality and character. In the eyes of his followers, men and women alike, he was the last scion of the clan established by his prestigious ancestor Judas the Gaulanite (or Galilean), a tight clan of fighters that maintained integrally a line of descendance—which lent it vast prestige—and virile love of independence, devoting their lives to preserving the message of Jewish freedom and its total refusal to acknowledge Roman dominion, and to acknowledge only God's (cf. 253[*c*] above). The burden of his speeches bears the genuine stamp of historicity, even though it was reported eventually to Josephus through the medium of the hapless two women survivors and their interpreters (cf. 404[*e*]). His delivery conveys the image of a compelling, almost magnetic personality that mesmerized all, then drove them irresistibly to act as he bade them. Josephus' reporting of the event, on the other hand, was apparently faithful and honest, even though Eleazar's speeches bear evident marks of the author's editing.

Remnants of closely woven wool garments



The self-delusion of the Jews

(370) "Arms, walls, impregnable fortresses, and a spirit unshaken by the dangers they took in the cause of liberty—these encouraged them all to rebel. (371) Yet these availed us but for a short time; they raised our hopes only to prove the onset of our mounting disasters; for all were taken, all succumbed to the enemy, as if provided especially to enhance their triumph, and not for the deliverance of the lives of those who furnished them. (372) We may well truly congratulate those who perished in the war, for they died defending and not betraying liberty. But who would not pity the masses who are now under the thumb of Rome? Who would not hasten to die rather than share their fate?

The miserable lot of those who remained

(373) "Some of them have been broken on the rack or tortured to death by fire and scourge; others have been half-eaten by wild beasts and then kept alive to provide them as food for a second time in order to afford merriment and sport to their enemies. (374) And those who are still alive must be reckoned as the most miserable, for they have often prayed for a death that does not come. (375) And where is the mighty city, the mother-city of the whole Jewish race, entrenched behind so many lines of ramparts, sheltered behind so many forts and lofty towers, that could hardly contain the provisions of war, and defended by thousands upon thousands of determined men? (376) What has become of the city that was believed to have God as her founder? Uprooted from her base, she has been wiped out, and all that remains of her is the camp of those who destroyed her occupying her ruins. (377) Wretched old men [*a*] sit dejected beside the ashes of the sanctuary [*a*], and a few women have been reserved by the enemy for the basest outrage [*b*]! (378) Which of us [*c*], realizing all these facts, could bear to face the sun, even if he could live free from danger? Who can be such an enemy of his own country, so unmanly, and so fond of life as not to be sorry he is still alive today? (379) Indeed, if only we had all died before seeing the holy city razed by enemy hands and that sacred Sanctuary so impiously uprooted! (380) But since an honorable hope deluded us in thinking that we might perhaps succeed in avenging her of her enemies, and now that all hope has vanished and left us alone in our distress, let us at once choose death bravely; let us have pity on ourselves, our wives and children, while we are still able to take pity on ourselves. (381) For we were born to die, we and those we have brought into the world: this even the most fortunate must face. (382) But outrage, slavery, and the sight of our wives led away to shame with our children—these are no necessary evils to which man is subject by nature; these befall men who would undergo them by their own cowardice, and those who have the possibility to forestall

them by death, but still refuse to take it [*d*]. (383) But we, who are very proud of our courage, revolted from Rome, and in the final stages they offered to spare our lives and we turned the offer down. (384) Who can fail to foresee their rage if they take us alive? Miserable will be the young men whose strong bodies can sustain many tortures, wretched the older men whose frames will not be able to sustain such torments. (385) Is a man to see his wife led off to be violated; to hear the voice of his child crying: 'Father' when his own hands are chained? (386) Come, while our hands are free to hold the sword, let them do a noble service. Let us die before we become slaves under our enemies, and leave this life together as free men with our children and wives! (387) This is what our traditions ordain, this is what our wives and children implore us to do. God Himself has imposed on us the necessity to do so, while the Romans wish us to do the reverse, for they are anxious that none of us should die before capture. (388) Let us therefore make haste, and before affording them their hoped-for pleasure at seizing us, leave them to be dumbfounded by our death and awed by our fortitude [*e*]."

D. TRAGIC DRAMA AT MASADA

Several Dead Sea Scroll fragments were found at Masada, having been brought there by the Zealots (cf. commentary 348[a]). They lend a deeper ideological significance to the undying devotion of the Zealots to their ideals and feelings of independence

Chapter IX

1. The tragic end of the community

(389) Eleazar would have brought up more arguments, but all his listeners cut him short and, impelled by an uncontrollable impulse, made haste to do the deed. As if possessed, they went their way, everyone anxious to be quicker than his neighbor and regarding it as positive proof of courage and wisdom not to be seen among the last—so irresistible a desire had seized them to slaughter their wives, their little ones, and themselves. (390) It might have been expected that as they approached their task, their determination would have cooled; but they clung resolutely to the purpose they had formed while listening to the address [*a*], and although personal emotion and love were alive in all of them, reason that had urged what was best for their loved ones prevailed. (391) For at the very moment when they embraced and caressed their wives and took their children in their arms, pressing upon them the last kisses, (392) hands seemingly other than their own assisted them in accomplishing their purpose, and the thought of the agonies they would suffer from the enemy consoled them for the necessity of killing them [*b*]. (393) And in the end not a man failed to carry out his terrible deed; one and all disposed of their families; wretched victims of necessity who with their own hands slew their wives and children, and felt it to be the lightest of evils [*c*]! (394) Unable now to endure

390[*a*] *Listening to the address* Evident proof of Eleazar's dynamic personality. Josephus presents him as the "tyrant" (or dictator) of the community, which he apparently was.

392[*b*] *Killing them* In the course of excavations, the bodies of twenty-five people, apparently thrown there by the Romans, were found in caves near the top of the southern cliff of Masada; they included fourteen men, six women, four children, and even one embryo. They were the remains of the defenders of Masada, which the Romans cleared away after the victory.

393[*c*] *The lightest of evils* The author's narrative in this chapter—and in the former—is imbued with deep feeling expressed with artistic skill. He is not satisfied to delineate the action alone, but also the innermost feelings of the personalities involved, thus achieving one of the most moving ancient prose creations, and elevating Masada through Eleazar and his entire community to an undying symbol of desperate courage, which has stirred Jewish hearts across the last nineteen centuries.

394[*d*] *On fire* While removing the debris of the northern palace, Y. Yadin came "upon a thick layer of ashes, the product of a powerful fire which we found... also coins struck during the Revolt, with such typical inscriptions as 'The Freedom of Zion.' It was clear that we were bringing to light the remains of that very fire mentioned" (*ibid.*, p. 54).

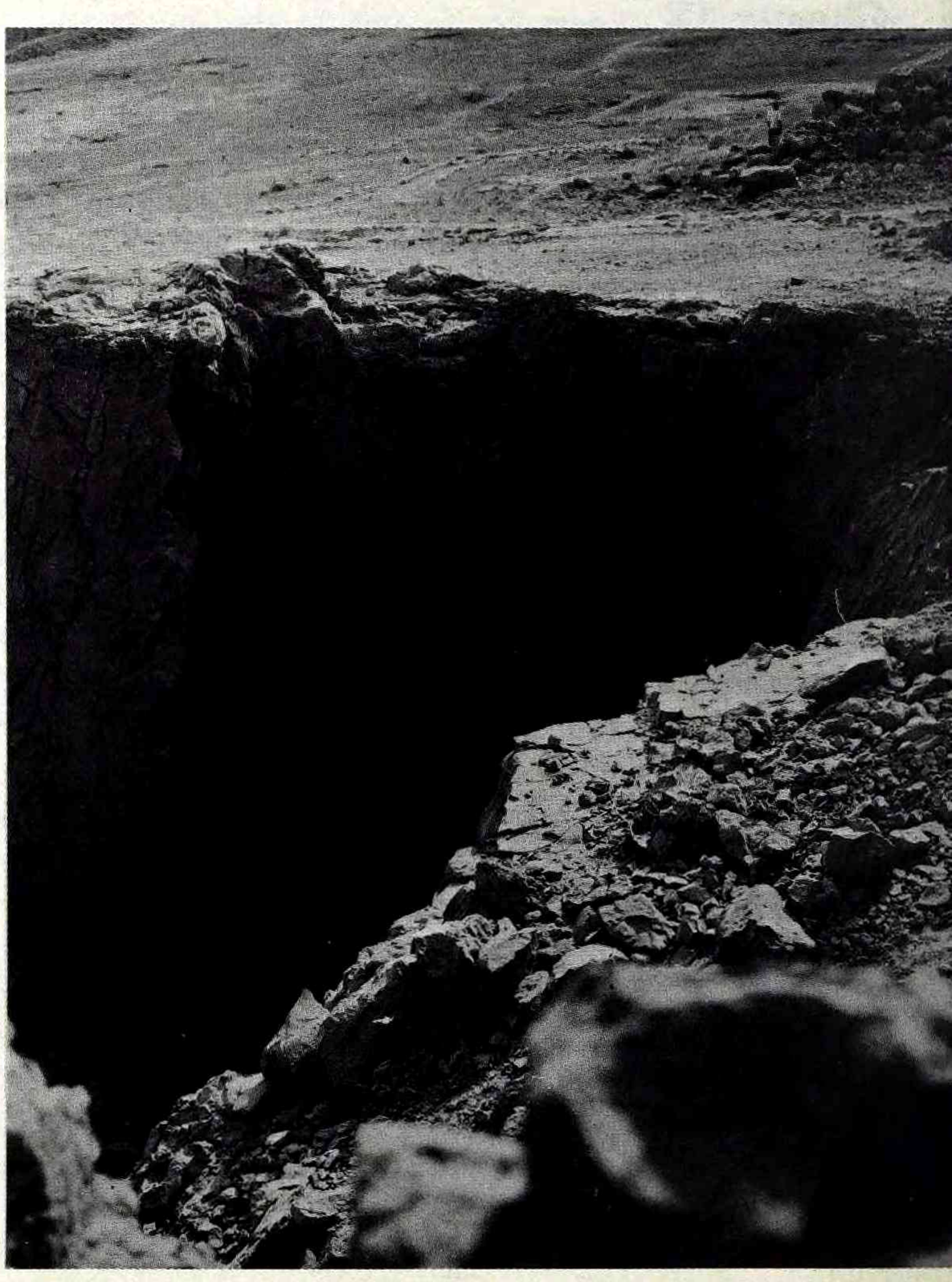
395[*a*] *By lot* He also found eleven small inscribed pieces of pottery and "upon each was inscribed a single name, each different from its fellow... Had we indeed found the very ostraca which had been used in the casting of lots?... The probability is strengthened that among these eleven inscribed pieces of pottery was one bearing the name "Ben Jair"... which could have referred to no other than Eleazar ben Jair... and his ten commanders who had been left to the last... and who had cast lots among themselves" (*ibid.*, p. 197; see illustration).

396[*b*] *Differ from another* One cannot help contrasting this encounter of the commanders, and their mutual trust, with Josephus' moment of truth in the cave below Jotapata and his harangue on suicide (*War* III, 361–382). The forty men who were there with him had posed the same problem of suicide (which Eleazar's men had solved in their own way). Yet Josephus did not consider his companions at Jotapata in the same light, but as foil to his quick wits and as sinners if they considered suicide. But he was an interested party at the time and he certainly sought no escape through suicide. Now, thinking of Masada as an onlooker, he could not hide his admiration and describes the scene with great pathos. In this respect, he does not disagree with Jewish tradition, which regarded self-destruction as a criminal act, excepting the case of people sentenced by Roman courts for political transgressions. Such offenders were considered *martyrs* for their faith. In the case of Masada, the remains of the bodies discovered by Yadin's expedition were buried with full honors in consecrated soil.

any longer their horror at what they had done, and thinking that they would be wronging the slain by outliving them even a short while, they quickly piled together all their provisions and set them on fire [*d*]; (395) then, having chosen ten men by lot [*a*] to be the executioners of the rest, each laid himself down beside his wife and children, and, flinging their arms around them, exposed their throats to those who had to perform the painful office. (396) The latter unflinchingly slaughtered them all, then followed the same mode for each other, so that the one who drew the lot should kill the nine and then himself last of all, such mutual confidence they all had in each other that neither in doing nor in suffering would one differ from another [*b*]. (397) So, finally, the nine bared their throats, and he who was the last of all, after surveying the prostrate multitude in case amid all the slaughter someone was left who needed his hand, and finding that all had been slain, set the palace ablaze and then, summoning all his strength, drove his sword right through his body and fell dead beside his family.

The name "Ben Ya'ir" is written on one of the eleven sherds found on the site. Ben Yair is most probably Eleazar ben Ya'ir, commander of the Zealots (cf. 395[a])

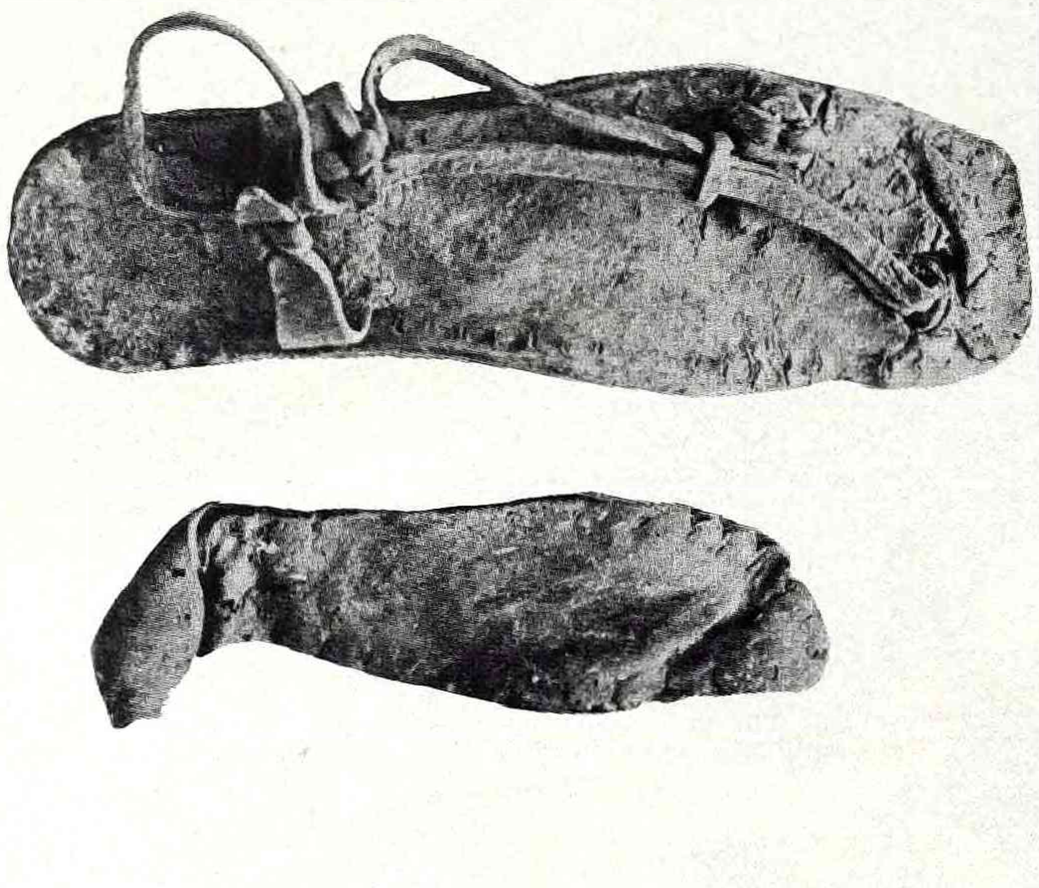
One of the huge cisterns that could have been used as a hiding place for the surviving women and children



The Roman statue that depicts a Gaul slaying his bride and himself is evocative of the tragic drama of Masada

399[*c*] *Underground aqueducts* Possibly the deep shaft leading to the large cistern, or those described in note 285[*c*].
401[*d*] *Xanthicus* 15th–16th Nisan of the Jewish calandar (AD 74).

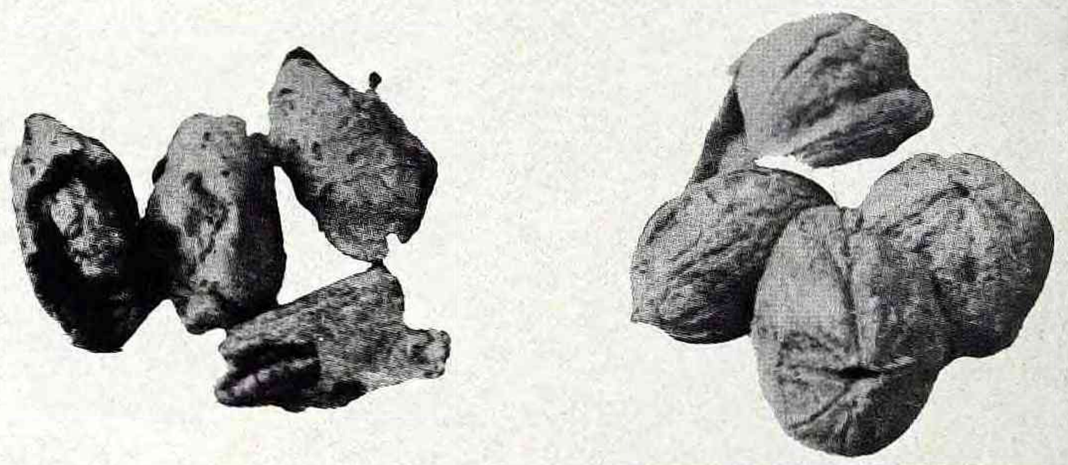
Sandals and arrows found near a skeleton of a Zealot warrior



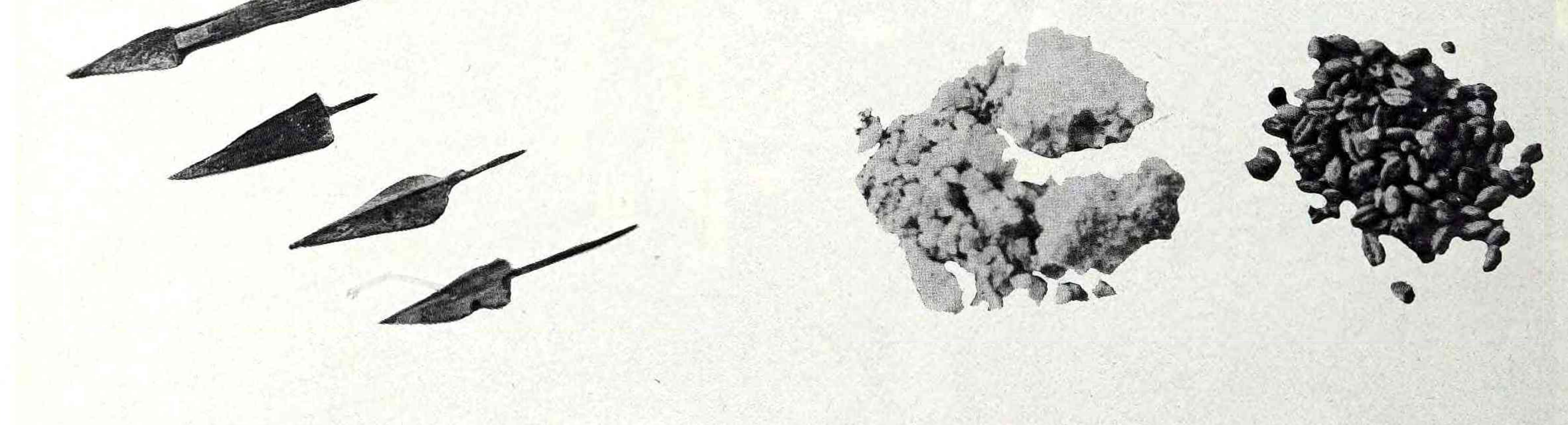
The seven who were left to the end

(398) They had died in the belief that they had left no living soul to fall into Roman hands; (399) but an old woman, along with another who was a relative of Eleazar and superior in intelligence and education to most women, with five little children had escaped and concealed themselves in the underground aqueducts [*c*], while the rest were occupied with their suicide. (400) The victims numbered nine hundred and sixty, including the women and children. (401) This tragedy took place on the fifteenth of the month Xanthicus [*d*].

Remains of 1,900-year-old grains and nuts



Cosmetic equipment found in the modest Zealot dwellings



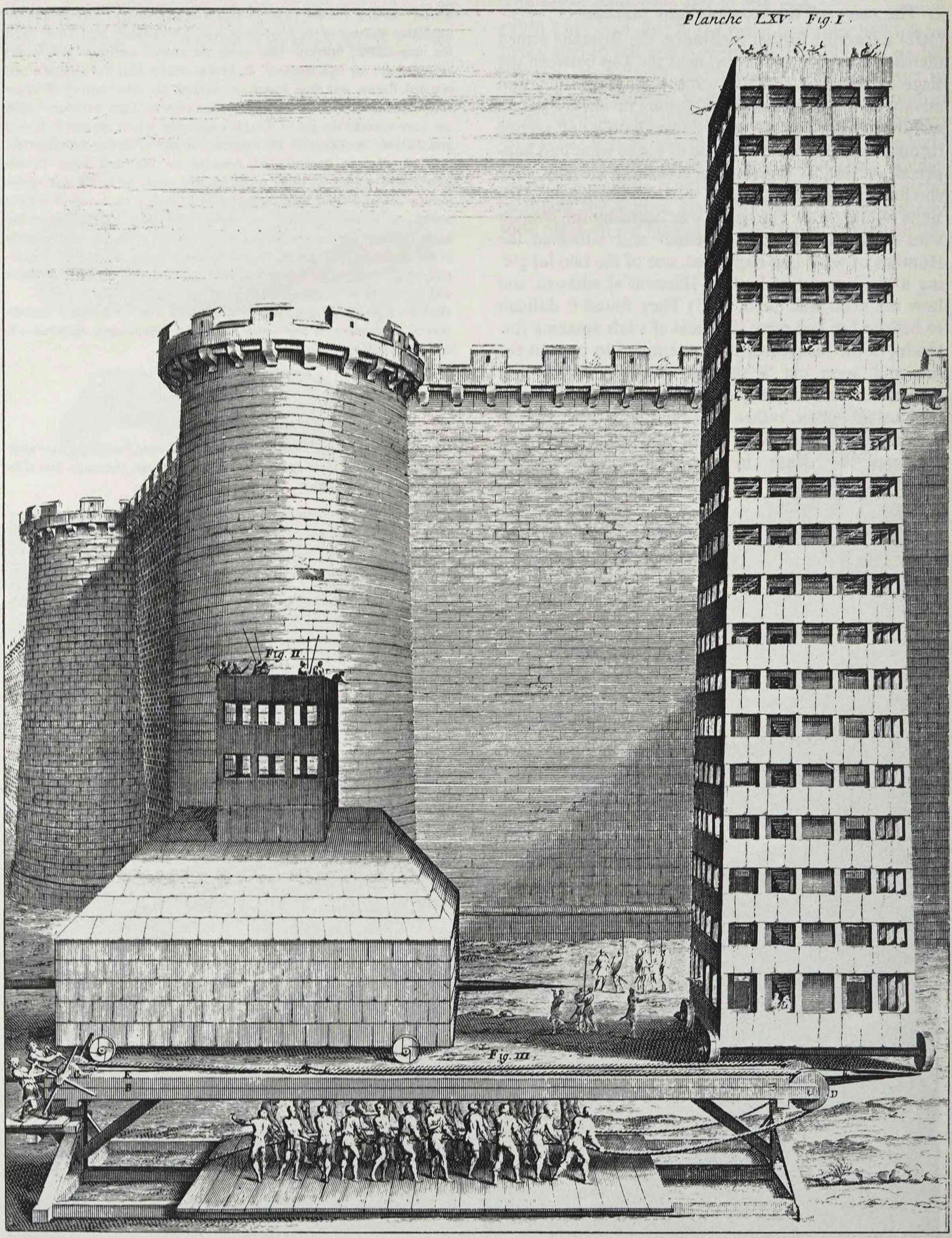
2. The entry of the Romans into Masada

(402) Expecting further resistance, the Romans armed themselves by daybreak, bridged the gap between the siege earthworks and the walls with gangways, and advanced to the assault. (403) Seeing no enemy but an awful desolation on all sides, flames within and silence throughout, they were at a loss to guess what had happened. At last, as if giving the signal for a volley, they shouted, hoping that some of those within would show signs of life. (404) The shout was heard by the women who emerged from the aqueduct and informed the Romans of what had happened, one of the two [*e*] giving a lucid report of both of [Eleazar's] address, and how the deed was done. (405) They found it difficult to believe her and were skeptical of such amazing fortitude; in the meantime, they attempted to put out the fire and soon cut a passage through which they entered the palace. (406) As they came upon the mass of the slain bodies, rather than exult over them as foes, they admired the nobility [*f*] of their resolve and their contempt of death in carrying it out without hesitating.

404[*e*] *One of the two* The woman was a relative of Eleazar and an intelligent member of the prestigious clan, whose sanity held out through the unspeakable horrors. This poses the crucial question: *Where did Josephus get his information?* B. Mazar doubts that the woman's tale reached Rome, and thus Josephus, through the intermediacy of some fairly intelligent Roman officers who were present. Their testimony could not have covered the gist of Eleazar's speeches, which are deeply Jewish and Zealotic in character. He suggests, subject to further investigation, that the Roman general had retained on his staff some Jewish interpreters, guides, or other prisoners who could be useful and advise him on Jewish mores. One such interpreter with a modicum of writing ability—a "minor Josephus" of sorts—may have been called to the scene to ferret out, by a gentle and sympathetic approach, the scenario of the events and the gist of Eleazar's stormy addresses. If such a document was conveyed to Rome it could have come to Josephus' attention and served as his source, which he in turn edited.

406[*f*] *Nobility* This qualification suggests that the Romans' expression of admiration—if any—may have been subsequently recorded. Cf. comment 404[*e*].

Several skeletons of Masada's Zealots, which were found in a cave near the top (and piled there by the Romans), were given honorable burial by the Israeli armed forces



Vitruvius' descriptions illustrate in the three interrelated sections I, II, III the functions of the high towers. Fig. I represents the 20-story tower. Fig. II represents the "turtle," which held the pointed ramming engine. Fig. III is an apparatus that was operated with the ram

E. REBELLIONS IN EGYPT AND CYRENE

Chapter X

1. Subjection of all Judaea

(407) The fortress having thus fallen, the general left a garrison on the site and returned with the army to Caesarea. (408) For no enemy was left anywhere in the country, but all of it was now vanquished by this extended war that had been experienced by many, even in the remotest parts, exposing them to the danger of disorder.

The Sicarii revolutionary refugees in Egypt

(409) Moreover, many Jews met with destruction after this date [*a*] in Alexandria, Egypt. (410) For some of the Sicarii faction who had managed to flee to that country, not content with their escape, embarked again on subversive activities and urged many of their hosts to claim their freedom and regard the Romans as no better than themselves, honoring God alone as their Lord and Master [*b*]. (411) When some of the prominent Jews opposed them [*c*], they were murdered, while the rest were constantly urged to revolt. (412) Observing their madness, the leaders of the Council of Elders [*d*] decided it was no longer safe to overlook what was going on; they summoned all the Jews to a general assembly [*d*] and exposed the madness of the Sicarii, proving them to have been the cause of all the troubles. (413) "Now," they said, "even their escape has not given them any hope of safety; because once they are recognized by the Romans, they would be killed immediately, and therefore they are seeking to involve in the disaster that they brought on themselves those who have no share in their crimes." (414) They accordingly advised the assembly to take care that these men should not bring ruin on their heads and suggested that they deliver them up and make their peace with the Romans. (415) Realizing how real was the danger, the people took their advice and, rushing furiously at the Sicarii, rounded them up. They seized six hundred then and there; (416) while all who had escaped into Egypt [*a*] and the Egyptian Thebes [*a*] were soon apprehended and brought back. (417) Everyone admired the fortitude and—call it what you will—desperation or strength of purpose they displayed. (418) When they were subjected to every form of torture and bodily laceration, only to force them to acknowledge Caesar as master, not a man gave in, nor came even near to uttering it; but all were triumphant over the pressure and maintained their determination; it seemed as if their bodies met torture and fire without pain, their souls almost exulting in it. (419) But nothing amazed the spectators as much as the behavior of young children, none of whom could be forced to call Caesar lord. This, indeed, is how their

409[*a*] *After this date* According to most modern Israeli scholars, among them the late M. Avi-Yonah *(Atlas Carta II)* and B. Mazar, the siege and fall of Masada took place in AD 74 and not in 73, as believed heretofore (other scholars still maintain the 73 date). Among the many reasons for the protracted delay in reaching this last Jewish pocket of resistance was a change of command (from Bassus to Silva, cf. 252) and, in addition, the absolute inaccessibility of Masada from the north and other sections of the mountains and wilderness of Judea, coupled with the tremendous logistical problems involved in planning the siege of the rock. The few narrow, precipitous paths leading through the Judean mountains to Masada, whose foot was situtated some 430 m. below sea-level, were impracticable for the transportation of siege engines and baggage. The only access appeared to be through the southern Negev and the Nabatean caravan route, which contoured the southern Dead Sea and passed south of Masada. The planning involved the help or advice from Nabatean traders, captive Jewish natives, even residents of Engedi, and above all, a long period of preparation before establishing several stone camps for the legion around the rock; the events in Egypt and Cyrene, as related in the relevant text, took place in AD 73. These uprisings were not led by excapees from Masada, as may be inferred from the flow of the narrative, but by other independent Sicarii. The burning of the Temple in AD 70 naturally had major repercussions in the Jewish communities throughout the Diaspora in north Africa. Many Sicarii refugees who escaped to Egypt and Cyrene (modern Libya) continued to spread their patriotic fervor in order to stir the local communities to renew revolt against the Romans during the next five decades.

410[*b*] *Their Lord and Master* Nothing would cause them to abandon their views and force them to acknowledge the emperor's supremacy.

411[*c*]–412[*d*] *Opposed them... Council of Elders* Cf. 419. The Jewish communities were torn between feelings of revenge and fear of Roman reprisals. It would appear that many a Jew may have shared fatalistic views aired in Eleazar's second speech (as expressed by Josephus) and been impressed by the hopelessness of it all. This pragmatic attitude, painful though it might have been, was shared mainly by the upper Jewish classes in Alexandria and among its elders who sought means to counter the so-called madness (to use Josephus' expression) that stirred up dark undercurrents in Alexandria. To offset this, the Sicarii revolutionaries again resorted to terror as they had done in Jerusalem before AD 70. The Jews of Alexandria were regarded as a *politeuma,* a legal settlement in the urban framework of Greek Alexandria. The *politeuma* was headed by its *gerousia* (Council of Elders) as an umbrella organization that took over the government of Jewish affairs. Its vitality is attested by the arrest of the Sicarii, as Josephus relates. By this vigorous suppression of Sicarian propaganda and absolute submission to Rome, the *gerousia* of Alexandria temporarily warded off the annihilation of the local community, deferred until the reign of Trajan (AD 115–117).

416[*a*] *Into Egypt... and Egyptian Thebes* The geographical and historical references to the *katoikias* or military establishment by Jewish soldiers and their descendants existing since Hellenistic Ptolemaic times and the days of high priest Onias IV in the second century BC (as related in *War* I, 33 and 190 ff.). The best known was the *katoikia* of Leontopolis, a district in the eastern part of the Nile delta. It was established around a fortified temple (not like the temple of Jerusalem), though Josephus had earlier stated (*War* I, 33) that it was. He corrected this in VII, 427 in the shape of a fortified tower befitting its isolation and military character. There were other such establishments, among them Pelusium (I, 191) in the northeastern borderland of Egypt, as well as at Elephantine (Syene-Aswan, *War* IV, 610) on the southern border of Egypt, and this may explain the reference in the text to Thebes. The older establishments enjoyed the status of *politeumas* (cf. 412 above). After their failure to stir up the Jews of metropolitan Alexandria, the Sicarii tried the same in the *katoikias* or *politeumas* outside Alexandria, and as far as "Thebes."

421[*b*]–423[*c*] *Onias... Antiochus* The person referred to is not Onias III but Onias IV (commented on in *War* 31[*d*]), who fled to Egypt around 153 BC and established the Jewish *katoikia* (military colony) of Leontopolis and its fortified temple. The event is also referred to in *Antiquities* XIII, 63–73; XIV, 133, written later than *War*, and based on the more accurate data at the author's disposal. The Onias in question is not the son of Simon, as stated in our text, but apparently the grandson of Simon the First or "the Just." Onias was barred from the high priesthood by his brother Simon (Shim'ī) and fled to Egypt, or, as Josephus writes, "from Antiochus," and he installed himself there as high priest of the temple in question. Another Jewish temple had already been in existence since Persian times at Elephantine or Yeb (cf. *War* IV, 608–610 and comment), and Onias, according to many historians, did not regard it sinful to erect such a temple at Leontopolis, i.e., outside Jerusalem and the Holy Land. As it turned out, this Onias was last of the line of high priests descended from the original House of Zaddok. The historicity of this Onias finds further indirect confirmation through an addendum to Mishna *Menahot* XIII. Other citations mentioned Beth-Honion as the military colony in Egypt.

423[*d*] *Ptolemy* Ptolemy IV Philometor, in whose period Jewish military settlements were founded in Lower Egypt.

426[*a*] *180 furlongs* Approximately 36 km from Memphis.

427[*b*] *Fortress* As noted in 416[*a*], Josephus corrects his previous statement in *War* I, 33.

428[*c*] *Candelabrum* A chandelier was installed there instead, unlike the famed gold candelabrum of the Jerusalem Temple (VII, 148 ff.).

430[*d*] The settlement plans of the Ptolemies, as explained in notes 416[*a*], 423[*c*].

432[*e*] *Isaiah* Referring to Isaiah's prophecy (also quoted in *Antiq.* XIII, 68) "In that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt" (Isa. 19, 19).

433[*a*]–434[*a*] *Shut up the building... treasures* The temple of Onias was closed down "for the very reason advanced by Titus' army commanders when they advocated at the Council meeting preceding the burning of the Temple of Jerusalem, that the sanctuary would be destroyed because the Jews would not stop rebelling while the house was standing" (G. Alon, *ibid.*, p. 256).

436[*a*] *343 years* The first digit is corrupt; hence 243 years would be more accurate. Generally speaking, Josephus, as a priest, referred to Onias' temple with a degree of contempt, and its destruction was God's judgment for their having transgressed the Deuteronomic law that forbade building the "single sanctuary" anywhere else than ordained by God—on Zion.

Terracotta wagon, from Hellenistic Alexandria

brave spirit prevailed over the weakness of their bodies!

2. Demolition of the Jewish temple of Onias

(420) Lupus was in charge of Alexandria at the time and he promptly reported the disturbance to Caesar. (421) The emperor, viewing with suspicion the constant tendency of the Jews to rebel, and fearing that they might again gather in large numbers and draw others with them, instructed Lupus to demolish the Jewish temple in the district named after Onias [*b*]. (422) This is a region in Egypt that was settled and gained its name under the following circumstances: (423) Onias, son of Simon, and one of the chief priests of Jerusalem, fled from Antiochus [*c*], king of Syria then at war with the Jews, and came to Alexandria where he was graciously received by Ptolemy [*d*], because of his hatred of Antiochus. Onias told him that he would make the Jewish nation his ally if he should agree to his proposal. (424) Since the king promised to do what lay in his power, he asked permission to erect a temple somewhere in Egypt and to worship God after the manner of his ancestors; (425) for, he added, that this would make the Jews all the readier to fight Antiochus who had sacked their temple at Jerusalem, promote their friendship toward him, and encourage many to flock to him and enjoy religious toleration.

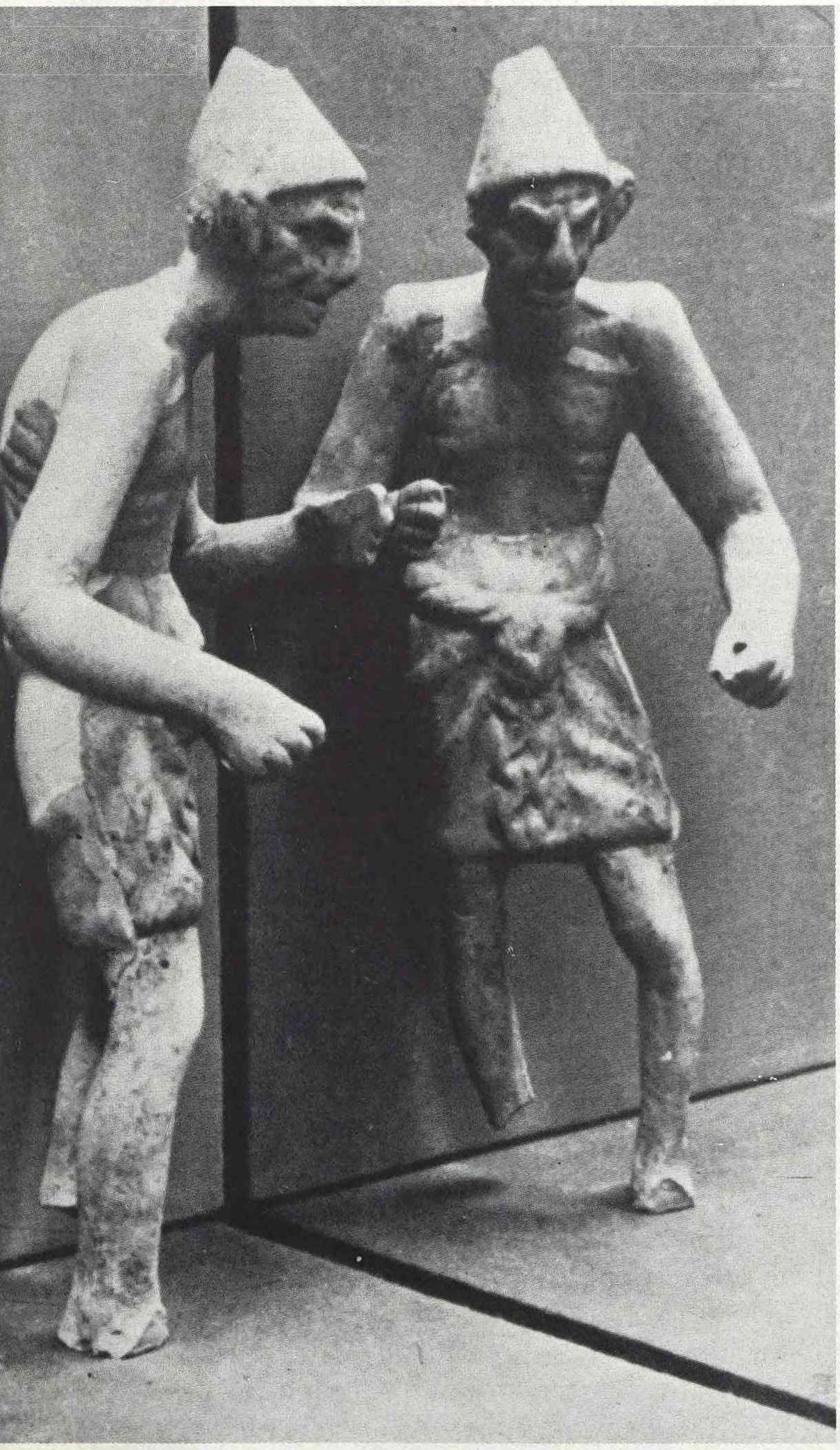
3. Description of Onias' temple

(426) Attracted by this statement, Ptolemy granted him a tract of land some hundred and eighty furlongs from Memphis [*a*], in the so-called district of Heliopolis. (427) Onias erected there a fortress [*b*] and built a temple (which was not like the Temple of Jerusalem, but resembled a tower [*b*]) built of huge stones and sixty cubits high. (428) He built the altar, however, on the model of that in his own country, and he adorned the building with similar votive offerings, except the model of the candelabrum [*c*]; (429) for instead of providing it with a stand, he had a lamp hammered out of gold; it shed a brilliant light and was suspended by a chain of gold. He surrounded the entire sacred precincts by a wall of baked bricks with a gateway of stone. (430) Moreover, the king assigned him extensive territory as a source of revenue, providing the priests with abundance and ample goods for the service of God [*d*]. (431) Onias, however, was not acting in all this by honest motives, for he intended to rival the Jews in Jerusalem, whom he resented for his exile, and he hoped by erecting this sanctuary to attract a great number of people away from them to it. (432) There had also been an ancient prophecy made some six hundred years earlier by someone named Isaiah [*e*], who had foretold the erection of this temple in Egypt by a man of Jewish birth. This, then, was the origin of this temple.

4. Lupus' destruction of the temple of Leontopolis

(433) On receipt of Caesar's letter, Lupus, the governor of Alexandria, proceeded to the temple, and after carrying out some of the votive offerings, shut up the building [*a*]. (434) Soon afterwards Lupus died, and Paulinus, the new governor, completely stripped the place of its treasures [*a*], threatening the priests with dire consequences if they failed to produce them all; he forbade would-be worshipers from coming near the precincts and, (435) shutting the gates, barred all access, leaving not a vestige of divine worship there. (436) The duration of the temple from erection to its closure was 343 years [*b*].

Workman in Alexandria



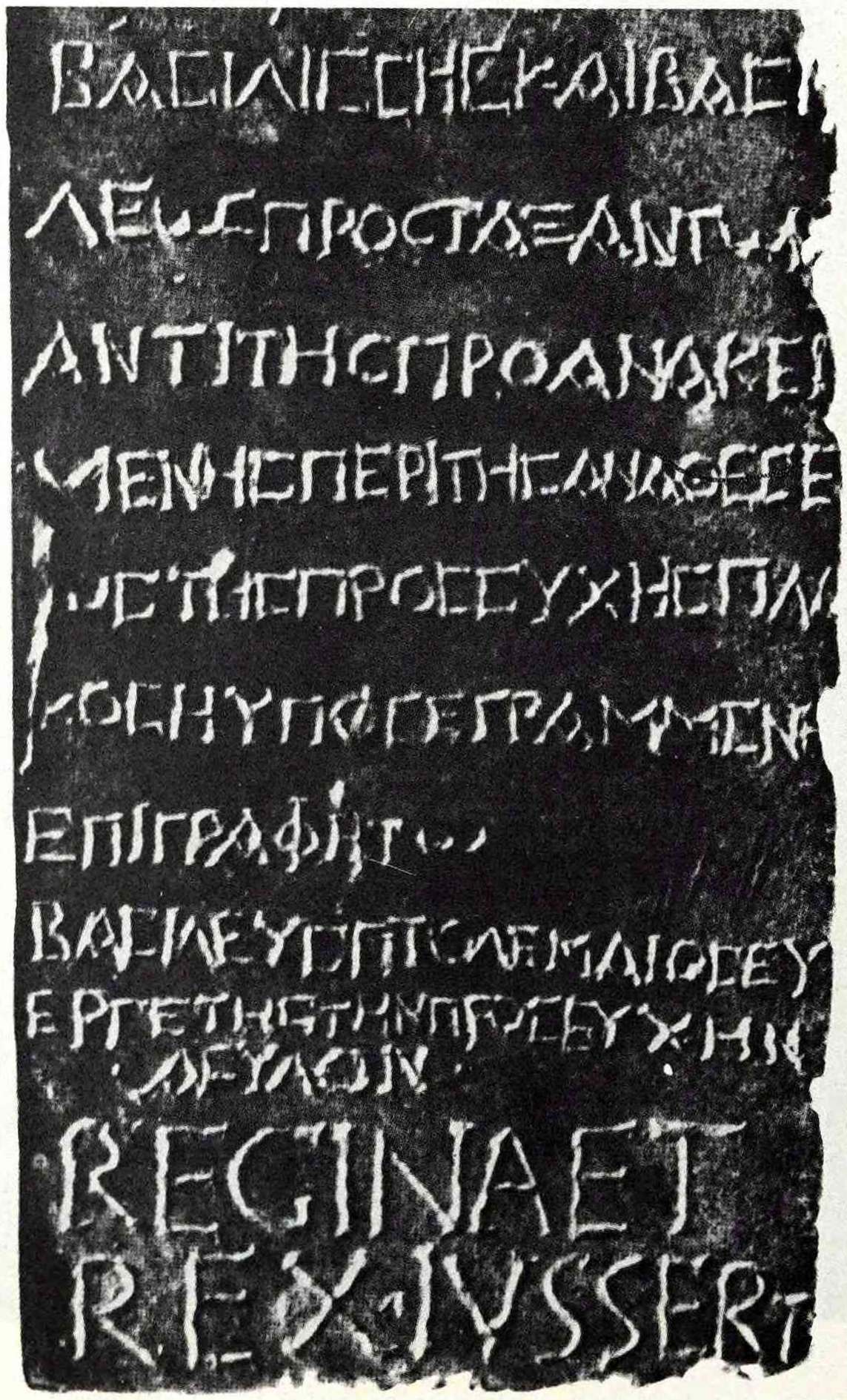
A peddler in Alexandria

437[*a*] *Sicarii* The destruction of the Temple in AD 70 was a source of Jewish upheavals both in Egypt and Cyrenaica. After the suppression of the revolt in Judaea, many insurgents escaped to Cyrenaica, seeking refuge and revenge over Rome. Josephus does not specify that they were Sicarii but that they were actuated by "Sicarii folly"; and indeed this ferment stirred Jewish rebellions for the next forty years in Trajan's time, and up to AD 125 in Hadrian's reign.

437[*b*] *Cyrene* The most important center in Cyrenaica (modern Libya; the second in importance being Berenice, modern Benghazi). The Jewish community in Cyrenaica had, politically and culturally, attained considerable standing, and its members extended a major influence on the entire Jewish people. Several of its members made valuable contributions to Jewish-Hellenistic literature, among which the history of the Hasmonean revolt from a strictly orthodox Jewish point of view. *II Maccabees* (referred to in the present commentary) is an abbreviated version of that work.

438[*c*] *Portents* It appears that Josephus did not have precise data to go by. He injected the amazing story of Jonathan the Weaver, who drew up an unarmed mob into the desert. G. Alon regards this episode as another "popupar messianic and miracle-producing movement" (*Jewish History in Mishnaic... Times;* Hebrew, p. 234). This suggests than even if it were messianic and patriotic in character, no open rebellion was involved. Some believe that it was a labor dispute involving Alexander, a leading merchant, or that these two thousand indigent Jews were a second generation of the agricultural proletariat created by the expropriation of Jewish settlers from the government domain, the *ager publicus*. In any case, the responsible *gerousia* opposed the movement.

Greek inscription discovered in Lower Egypt, attesting the existence of an ancient synagogue in Egypt that had the right of asylum *granted by Ptolemy III (246–221 BC)*



Chapter XI

1. Further disturbances in Cyrene

(437) Like an illness, the mad folly of the Sicarii [*a*] also infected the towns around Cyrene [*b*]. (438) An unprincipled scoundrel called Jonathan, by trade a weaver, having found refuge there, persuaded not a few men of the poorer class to follow him into the desert, promising to show them signs and portents [*c*]. (439) His knavish activities escaped most of the citizens, but the leading Jews in Cyrene reported his exodus and the preparations he made, to Catullus, the governor of the Libyan Pentapolis [*d*]. (440) He dispatched a body of cavalry and infantry, and easily crushed the unarmed mob [*a*], destroying most of them in the engagement, and a few were taken prisoner and brought before Catullus. (441) The leader of the plot, Jonathan, escaped at the time, but he was caught after a long and meticulous search of the whole country; and when he was brought before the governor, he contrived to save his own skin but gave Catullus a pretext for injustice (442) by falsely asserting that the wealthiest of the Jews had given him his instructions in the scheme [*b*].

2. Catullus' criminal action in Libya

(443) Catullus, readily entertaining these charges, invested the matter with serious significance, pompously exaggerating it in order that he too might be credited with winning a Jewish war. (444) But worse still, not only did he show his absurd credulity, but he also gave the Sicarii lessons in falsehood. (445) Thus he instructed Jonathan to name one of the Jews, Alexander, with whom he had formerly quarrelled and was now openly on bad terms, involving his wife Berenice in the allegations. These were slain first. (446) He next murdered all the wealthiest Jews, three thousand [*c*] persons in all; he felt quite safe in doing so, since he confiscated their possessions [and added them] to the imperial treasury.

3. Josephus' alleged involvement

(447) Moreover, to prevent the Jews living elsewhere from exposing his villainy, he extended the scope of his false accusations and persuaded Jonathan and others who had been arrested with him to bring a charge of sedition against the most respectable Jews in both Alexandria and Rome. (448) Among those treacherously incriminated in this way was Josephus [*a*], the author of this history. (449) However, Catullus did not profit as he had expected. He arrived in Rome, bringing Jonathan and his associates in chains, satisfied that the false accusations brought before him at his instance would be accepted without question. (450) But Vespasian, suspicious of this matter, inquired into the facts and, finding no justification for the accusations brought against these men, acquitted them of the charges at the urging of Titus, and gave

Jonathan the punishment he deserved. He was first tortured, then burned alive.

4. (451) Catullus for the time being suffered nothing but a reprimand [*b*] due to the leniency of the emperors; but soon afterwards he succumbed to a complicated and incurable disease and came to a miserable end, not only chastened in body but suffering more deeply from a deranged mind. (452) For he was haunted by terrors and was continually crying out that he saw the ghosts of those he had murdered standing before him; and unable to contain himself, he would leap from his bed as if he himself were being tortured and burned (453). His malady grew rapidly worse, and his bowels were ulcerated through and fell out; and so he died, affording proof, if ever there was one, of how God in His providence executes judgment on the wicked.

5. Epilogue

(454) Here we conclude our history, which we promised [*a*] to report with utmost accuracy for the benefit of those who wish to learn how the Romans waged this war against the Jews [*a*]. (455) How it is to be rendered must be left to the judgment of the readers; but as regards the truth [*b*], I would not hesitate to assert confidently that, throughout the entire narrative, I have aimed at nothing else.

439[*d*] *Pentapolis* The "five town" or province organization engaged, among other things, in the maintenance and control of the prosperous Saharan caravan trade.

440[*a*] *Unarmed mob* This statement is refuted in para. 448, which indicates that Josephus himself provided them with money and arms.

442[*b*] *Scheme* The whole strange picture, as depicted, is difficult to understand, and the implication of the upper classes of Cyrene in the plot is less comprehensive. Cf. note 451[*b*].

446[*c*] *Three thousand* Such a number of wealthy Jews, whose property was confiscated, suggests the vast numerical and financial strength of the community. Allowing for some exaggeration (they were two thousand, according to *Life* 424) we may still assume that Cyrene was once one of the major centers of the Jewish-Hellenistic Diaspora (the other important center in Africa was Berenice, as noted). Josephus, in *Antiquities* VII, 445, writes that Catullus thought he could execute these Jews with impunity because he had confiscated their property for the treasury. Possible implications are sinister.

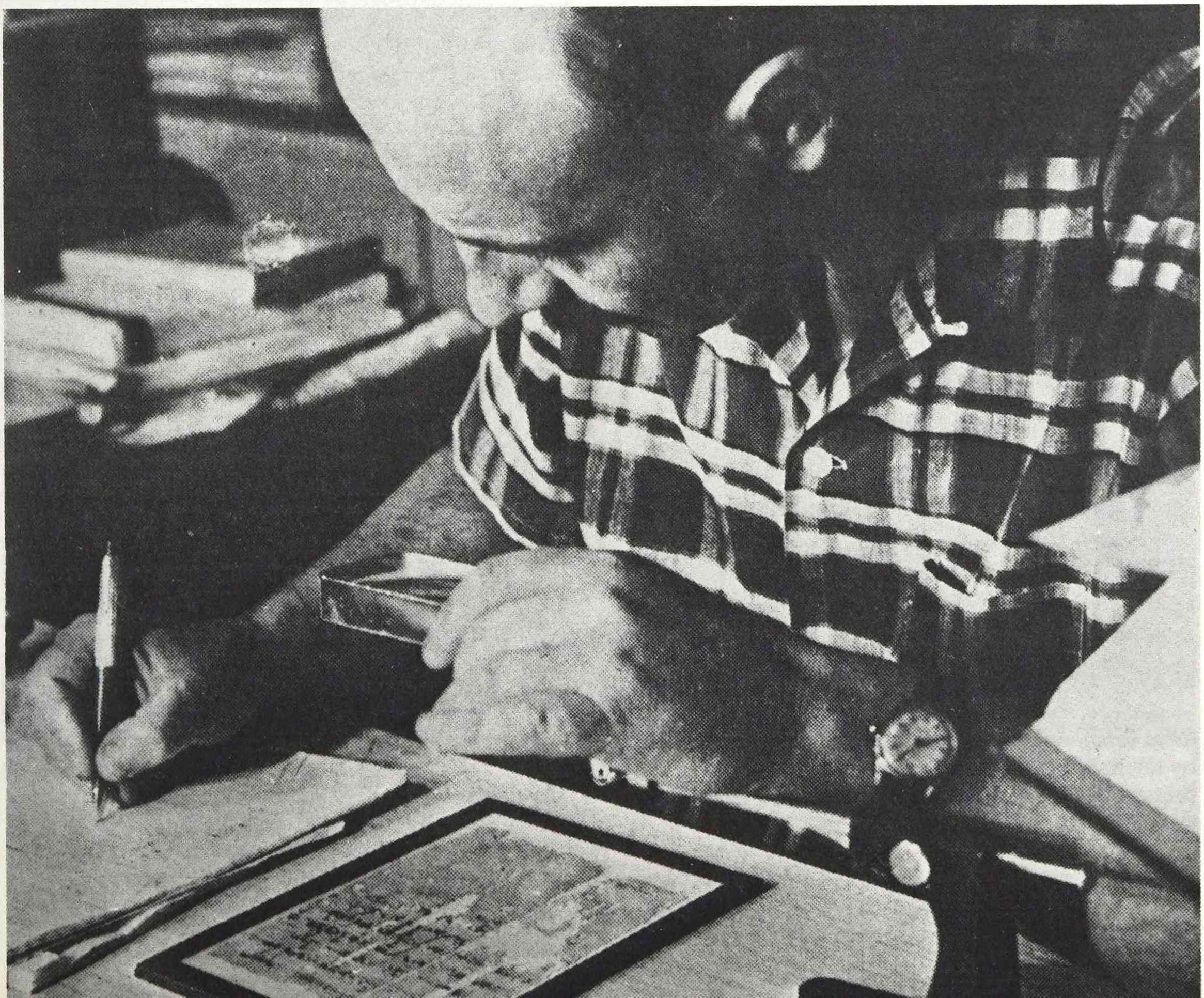
448[*a*] *Josephus* The author alludes to this accusation again in his *Life,* 424 ff.: "Jonathan... asserted that I had provided them with arms and money." He stated above (440[*a*]) that the mob was unarmed.

451[*b*] *Catullus... reprimand* Josephus implied more than he said about the brutal humiliation of Cyrene Jewry. He cites the brutal annihilation of the Jewish aristocracy of Cyrene as part and parcel of the atmosphere of hatred and oppression, as well as the exorbitant Jewish taxation that was characteristic of Rome's attitude to Jewry in general after AD 70. The violent explosion in Trajan's time, forty years later, is an indication of what followed.

454[*a*] *Promised* In the opening remarks to the Preamble of this work.

455[*b*] *Truth* The author, in the manner of Hellenistic writers, closes the book by leaving the appreciation of style and interpretation to the reader's judgment; but this does not relate to its truth, which he challenged anyone to disprove. The reader will be judge of this.

Professor Y. Yadin deciphering a scroll fragment



APPENDIX

THE TESTIMONIUM FLAVIANUM

(See Book II, 174–175)

Flavius Josephus' testimony about Jesus

This celebrated passage in *Antiquities* XVIII, 63–64, written shortly after Jesus' time, has become — since Eusebius (d. AD 339) first quoted it in his *Ecclesiastical History*—of great interest to the Christian Church. It was considered reliable Jewish evidence for Jesus' divine nature, messiahship and resurrection, and was probably one reason why the church preserved Josephus' Greek writings, the main source of information for the period. Since the sixteenth century, however, the genuineness of the *Testimonium* has been called into question and is still the focus of scholarly investigation. The discussion here focuses on the passage in *Antiquities* XVIII and refrains from dealing with another account about Jesus found in the old Russian or Slavonic version of *War,* which is regarded by most scholars as a later Christian interpolation.

The state of recent scholarship

The problem of the authenticity of the *Testimonium Flavianum* has divided scholars into various groups, most disputing, but some accepting its authenticity. The intricate subject has produced an enormous literature. Because of its importance, the entire unabridged passage (in translation known traditionally as the "Vulgate" text) is cited in the left column adjacent. Most scholars who deny the authenticity of the passage claim that it does not conform to Josephus' beliefs, since, as a Pharisee, he could hardly have asserted the messiahship of Jesus, and his work must therefore have been subject to early Christian interpolation.

A new direction in clarifying the problem of what might have been Josephus' original version has been pointed out by Professor S. Pines of the Hebrew University in his monographic study *An Arabic Version of the Testimonium Flavianum and its Implications* (Jerusalem, 1971). This Arabic manuscript is part of a universal history written by Agapius, a tenth-century Melkite (eastern Christian) historian. The Agapian version is shown in the right column. It lacks all the solely Christian characteristics found in the "Vulgate version" of Eusebius, on account of which most scholars rejected this passage as an interpolation by the hands of a Christian copyist, while Agapius expressed it in the manner a Jew might have written with less difficulty.

The source of Agapius' text

S. Pines believes that the subject matter of the *Testimonium* was acquired by Agapius from an early text of Josephus kept by Eusebius (AD 260–339), the Bishop of Caesarea. The text may have been preceded by an earlier (original) one in his possession or in ancient material formerly collected in the library of Caesarea by its founder, Origen (AD 184–254), the Alexandrian church father who studied and translated Jewish writings. An extant Syriac translation of Eusebius' writings on the history of the Church was available for Agapius, the Melkite bishop of Mambij (Hierapolis) in Phrygia, Asia Minor.

The discussion of Agapius' source is not at an end; but his version substantiates an earlier text of Josephus regarding Jesus, which was Agapius' source. In any case, there is evident proof of interpolation by the hands of a Christian who, by philological sleight-of-hand, transformed Josephus' historical Jewish text into an orthodox Christian text.

Vulgate version	Agapian version
About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who wrought surprising feats and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Messiah. When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing among us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had in the first place come to love [him] did not cease. On the third day he appeared to them restored to life. For the prophets of God had prophesied these and myriads of other marvelous (things) about him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still up to now not disappeared.	At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good, and (he) was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive; accordingly, he was perhaps the Messiah concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders. (And the Christian community named after him has survived to this day.)*

* Pines believes that the last sentence was found in Josephus' version, even though not in Agapius.

Dutch edition of Josephus' work dating to AD 1665

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